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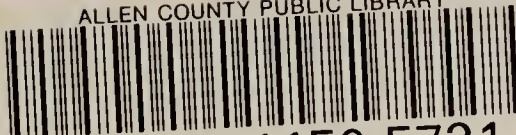
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THE COCK ON THE COVER, drawn by *Robert Hallock*, represents one of the distinguishing features of Newtown—the weathervane atop the steeple of the Congregational Church. The rooster dates back at least to Revolutionary days. Beyond that his age is mere conjecture. This proud chanticleer is enormous, measuring 5 feet high by 6 feet from tip to tip. He was originally covered with gold leaf but is now simply gilded. His famous bullet holes were once filled in by a painter who took down the vane to re-gild it. The painter, however, was ordered to punch out the solder—such was the esteem of certain people for the antiquity of the venerable bird!

NEWTOWN
CONNECTICUT
Past and Present

*Cover Design and Twelve Illustrations
by Newtown Artists*

FIRST EDITION

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Robert Hallock

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FOREWORD

This book has been compiled by the League of Women Voters of Newtown.

It contains a brief outline of our picturesque historical background, a description of the present town, our government, our educational system and a list of our religious, cultural and civic organizations.

The League, which is non-partisan, provides accurate information on local, state and national issues, after careful study and discussion. It strives to encourage citizens to take an active and informed part in our democratic form of government.

In conformity with the usual policy of the League, this book has been prepared by the joint efforts of a Committee, consisting of Mrs. Jerome P. Jackson, Chairman, and the following members: Mrs. James Brunot, Mrs. Raymond L. Hall, Mrs. M. Fridolf Jacobson, Mrs. Frank L. Johnson, Mrs. William H. Knox, Mrs. Malcolm R. McClintock, Mrs. Frank C. McGlinchy, Mrs. Bradley Randall.

The Committee is grateful to the many townspeople who have helped with this publication; the town officials, librarians, artists, scientists, the "Bee" staff and numerous others.

The purpose in publishing this book is to stimulate interest in the affairs of our town, so that in planning for its future development, Newtown may become an even more beautiful and desirable place in which to live.



The Purchase From The Indians 1705

THE PAST

THE EARLIEST YEARS

Although this year we celebrate Newtown's 250th Anniversary, in comparison with the founding dates of other nearby towns, ours is not so venerable after all. Neither is it the first "Newtown" in the State. The Connecticut Colony was established in 1632 by intrepid souls from New Town, now Cambridge, in Massachusetts, who followed Thomas Hooker westward through the wilderness and settled on the shore of a broad and beautiful river, and called their colony Newtown. Not until several years had passed was the name changed to Hartford.

Later groups settled along the sea coast: Stratford in 1636, New Haven in 1638, Milford and Fairfield in 1639 and Norwalk in 1640.

In those early days, the rivers of course provided the easiest means of travel, and it was not long before the colonists at the mouth of the Housatonic explored the upper reaches of the river, navigable as far as New Milford. The value of its fertile valley and of the abundant water-power of its tributary streams was quickly realized, and settlers ventured to establish themselves in Derby, Woodbury (at that time comprising our neighbors, Southbury, Roxbury and Bridgewater) and New Milford.

What is now Newtown was not, in the late 1600's, unexplored wilderness. The territory — known as "Quanneapague" — was held by the Pohtatuck Indians, but they were friendly in their dealings with the white men.

There is nothing spectacular about the Connecticut Indians of this region. Those of the Housatonic valley probably came from the shores of the Hudson

River, and were Mohicans. One tribe, the Paugussetts, was divided into five clans with the tongue-twisting names of Wipawaugs, Unquowas, Pohtatucks, Pomperaug and Naugatucks. They settled first in Kent, calling their place "Schaghticoke," and later spread down the river to the shore, for the fishing. About 1680 they migrated back up the Great River and settled first in Derby, then Newtown, Woodbury and New Milford.

They moved about mostly on foot, but they did have dugout canoes. (One was found some years ago in the lake at Putnam Park). One historian says of the Pohtatucks, "Their insignificance is proved by the almost total silence of authors concerning them, and by their noiseless disappearance."

It was not unsafe then, for the white men to enter the territory of the Pohtatucks. The direct overland route between Boston and New York went through Hartford, Newtown and Norwalk, whence the traveler usually proceeded by water to the great seaport. Well-defined paths, undoubtedly developed from Indian trails, used by horseback riders and drivers of ox-carts, crossed this area in several directions. Those courageous travelers must early have observed the fine forests here, as well as the meadows whose soil was invariably described as "gravelly loam which is very productive."

The Colonial Government of Connecticut owned all the land. Upon petition it made grants to individuals and to towns, and seven grants had been made in the area of present-day Newtown before 1705. The names of several of these first settlers — Sherman, Botsford, Burr, Shelton, Hubbell — have a familiar ring in our ears today.

THE PURCHASE OF 1705

Unlike many New England townships, ours was not settled by religious zealots determined to have their own community where they could worship in freedom; on the contrary, its founding was based upon a speculative land deal, and a rather shady one at that.

William Junos (or James), a yeoman, and Capt. Samuel Hawley, Jr., were Stratford men, Justus Bush was "a mariner" from New York. We do not know how they came to be interested in the territory hereabouts, nor what were their relations with the Indians. Probably they had paddled up the Housatonic from Stratford and were impressed by the fine land adjacent to the thriving farms of the seven who had been granted plantations by the Colonial Court. At any rate, on July 25th (Old Calendar) 1705, Junos, Hawley and Bush met with three Sachems of the Pohtatuck tribe, Mauquash, Massumpas and Nunnawauk, at the Indian encampment at the junction of the Housatonic and Pohtatuck rivers. Acting without the authority of the Colonial Court, which alone had the power to give title, the three speculators bought from the Indians "a Certain Tract of land Butted and Bounded by Stratford, Fairfield, Danbury, New Milford and the Great River—", an area about eight miles long and six miles wide. In the Land Records of Newtown is recorded the deed, and the purchase price was "four guns, four broadcloth Coats, four blankitts, four ruffelly Coats, four Collars, ten shirts, ten pair of stockings, forty pounds of lead, ten pounds of powder and forty knives."

It was not long before the General Court of the Colony learned of this transaction, and at its session in New Haven shortly afterward the following vote was passed: "whereas some persons, contrary to the laws of this Colony lately purchased of the Indians some thousand acres of land, this Court doth recommend that the offenders be prosecuted for their illegal purchase—." By May of 1706 it appears that Junos had already offered to surrender to the Court his holdings in the deal, and as the other two parties to the transaction made satisfactory restitution, all three escaped without further prosecution. Before long Junos, probably glad to be rid of this hot potato on his hands, sold out part of his interest. Samuel Hawley, however, more confident of the value of the tract in which he still held a third portion, joined with other valiant Stratford citizens and bought out Junos' remaining claim and all that of Bush. Forty-eight Rights in the land were thus bought, and the ancient deed is copied into the Newtown Records. A more picturesque way of acquiring land in those far-away days is shown by the action of the Court in Hartford, when in 1678 that august body "grants John Hubbell in consideration of his loss of one of his fingers and one ear, etc., one hundred acres of land—." We shall never know how Hubbell's injury was incurred: an Indian? A wild beast?—but it is reassuring to learn of so kindly an action on the part of the Government. It was not until 1710 that Hubbell's sons claimed the grant, and then chose one hundred acres in Newtown.

A CHARTER IS GRANTED

By the year 1708 Newtown was evidently in the good graces of the General Court of the Colony because upon petition of thirty-six settlers, a Charter was granted, bestowing Town Rights upon the community. The area was officially defined and it was decreed that it "shall be one entire town, called by the name of Newtown." Lost in legend was the Indian name, Quanneapague. The General Assembly appointed a Committee to survey "said Tract of land and consider what numbers of inhabitants the Tract will conveniently accommodate and accordingly determine where ye Town Platt shall be and lay out a suitable number of home lotts." The boundaries of ye Town Platt were Queen Street and Carcass Lane (Wendover Road), on the East, Deep Brook on the South, "The Great Hill" toward the West, and the road to Danbury on the North.

Home Lots of four acres each were laid out, 41 at first, and later others were added. "Ye names of the Petitioners for ye Lands" are sturdy Anglo-Saxon ones, and the bearers of them, along with the seven of the earlier grants, were the original Proprietors of Newtown.

"PITCHING" FOR THE LAND

Each of the Proprietors had the right to "pitch", which is to say, to draw lots, for the 4-acre Home Lots and for other divisions of the common land as soon as they could be "layed out." Distribution by this method "was construed as leaving the judgment to God." The Rights to the land were bought, sold and divided again and again, and the deeds of the transactions are available to the student, many addressed "To all Christian people to whom these presents shall come."

In the early spring of 1710, twenty-two Stratford men holding Rights to the land "took their pitch" for lots further from the center of town. Every effort was made toward a fair division of the "pitches." Acreage was "equally divided to each proprietor by a Sizer, and what is wanting in quality to be made up in quantity." Most of these lots contained twenty acres, but in some cases adjustments were made, as in the following examples: "Josiah Burit the north lott, Abraham Kimberly the south lot, only Kimberly's lot contains but 9 acres and is to have 11 acres more adjoining to the west side" and "Note that John Griffin in lieu of ye home lot layed out to him accepts of land layed by his dwelling house and hath two acres layed at the east end of his twenty acre lott and two acres on the west side of Mr. prindle's home lott adjoining to it."

Pitching for the common land continued for many years, until all was used up, and the early Records are largely concerned with these transactions.

Swamp land was considered even more valuable than upland because winter hay could be cut there. Meadows had been kept cleared by the Indian custom of burning them over for untold years. Another method of making brushy land fit for meadow use was to "drown" it. This killed off the tree growth and in time it could be reclaimed for pasture or crops. What was too rocky for plowing was used for sheep pasturage. We read of "10 acres on ye hill called Hawley's Folly," which meant Hawley's *fallow*, or cleared, woodland, and "Beers'es folly" is also mentioned.

As each division of land was made—ever further removed from ye Town Platt, notice was given to "all ye inhabitants," and it was "voted that if any of ye proprietors don't agree when ye time comes for to pitch they shall lose their pitch and ye next shall take it successively." Notifications for such town affairs were posted "at three certain places ten days before sd meeting, namely at ye oak tree near Sargeant Joseph Botsford, one at ye pound, and one at ye oak tree near Johnathan Booth's house which shall be sufficient warning to ye inhabitants of Newtown." People were also summoned to public gatherings by "ye beat of ye drum" until as late as 1764, and for years Stephen Parmalee was hired for this service.

Pitching for land did not always proceed without controversy. In February 1712 a vote was taken "to revoke and disallow ye lot that was drawn in January because of some unfair dealings by some persons.—Peter Hubbell protests against it." And five years later a dispute arose over a division of one and one-quarter acres apiece, and the record refers to such contending and jarring over the matter that it was known as "the Jangling Division." It was agreed that "all should have $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres—excepting John Glover who has no right to this little Division of land. If he pretends he has, he may expect trouble as to his 60 Acres illegally granted to him by ye Town."

One early pitch records the order of drawing the lots as "Josiah Curtis ye 1, Job Sherman ye 2,—minister ye 13"—one wonders if the superstition concerning that number figured in the lottery, and if it were felt that the minister could safely cope with the sinister share.



THE TOWN IS RECOGNIZED

The year 1711 is a momentous one in Newtown's history. It was then that the General Court of Connecticut Colony granted the settlement power to elect its own officers and to enjoy all the rights and privileges "as all other towns in this colony generally have and enjoy."

The first business meeting was held at the house of Peter Hubbell on September 24, 1711. Hubbell was voted Newtown's first Town Clerk, Abraham Kimberly constable, Ebenezer Prindle and Thomas Sharp surveyors of highways, Joseph Gray and Daniel Foote fence viewers, and Johnathan Booth field driver or hayward.

The General Court appointed "ye figure 7 to be ye town Brand Mark for their horses," and also decreed that the Annual Town Meeting should be held in December. Consequently, on December fourth following, at the house of Daniel Foote, the "inhabitants" met and elected Ebenezer Pringle to be the First Selectman, with Samuel Sanford and John Platt "Townsmen" for the year. Also elected were "listers and collectors," (Ebenezer Prindle—he of the varied spelling,—John Platt and Samuel Sanford), and a "brander of horses," (Abraham Kimberly). Also a committee of five to lay out divisions of land and highways.

It was moreover enacted that "all persons who refuse or neglect to attend ye town meetings shall pay ye sum of three shillings to ye treasury of ye town." Perhaps we today should follow this example.

“A TREATE FOR YE INDIANS”

One is greatly impressed by the conscientiousness and enterprise of these Founders of ours. At a time when travel was always difficult, often impossible, communication subject to endless delays, the vital needs of life itself dependent upon their own labor and skill, they still followed orderly procedure in establishing a Town, a Town government, and laws imposing restrictions upon themselves for the benefit of all. The land, of course, was their primary interest. A man's land was his very existence. All boundary lines were important, and as early as December, 1712, we find this action taken at a Town Meeting: “—The Inhabitants Afore sd made choyce of John Glover, James Harde, Jeremiah Turner and John Platte, A committy to measure ye land & settle ye bounds with ye indians of That Purchuce which William Jeanes purchased of ye indians with his asotiates in ye boundaries of Newtown—Also to procure four Gallons of rume to treate ye indians and to refresh ym selves & charge ye Towne debter for the rume.—” It would seem that our forebears lacked neither astuteness nor diplomacy, for the boundaries in question were amicably established.

THE OLD CEMETERY—AND LATER ONES

Another duty which had to be undertaken even before the first Town Meeting was the sad one of providing a “buring place for our dead.” Accordingly, on March 24, 1711, one and a half acres in the lower part of the community were set aside as a Town Plot. This is the southerly or “old” section of the Newtown Village Cemetery, (still owned by the Town). Although the earliest gravestone there is dated 1741, it is reasonable to assume that numerous burials preceded that date. Those were the days of brief life spans and high mortality rates, especially for children, and probably many little Newtowners were laid to sleep there on the gentle slopes so beautifully cared for now. But at that time the cemetery presented a different appearance, judging from the Town Record of 1711 when it was voted “Stephen Pearmelee to have the use of 1½ acres, which is the burying place or yard provided he clear the bushes and fences it and sows it with English grass seed.” Provision for further care was made in 1769 when it was voted that “Mr. John Chandler shall have the liberty to fence the burying ground for pasture so long as he will keep it in good fence.”

The graves of Newtown's first two ministers, the Reverend Thomas Tousey and the Reverend John Beach are in this old cemetery, as well as several other

early preachers, and there is reason to believe that some French soldiers were buried there during the Revolution—poor souls, so far from home.

The elaborate epitaphs on many of the 18th century headstones give interesting side-lights on Newtown's later history, and some others touch the heart with their ingenuous inscriptions. One especially quaint one is as follows:

“Here lies interred the
body of Mrs. Jane, the
dear wife of Richard
Fairman Esq., who dw
elt together in the mar
ried state 30 ye
ars, wanting 23 days,
And was in his opinion a
woman of the best sense and
judgement that he was e
ver acquainted with, a
nd he believes truly pious,
who dep'r'd this life in the
58th yr of her age May 16
1775”

The Town Plot was very far from the people living in the northwest part of the village, so in 1748 they presented a petition to the Selectmen asking for “60 rods for a burying place” of their own. This is the Land's End cemetery, still in use today. Jeremiah Turner who, tradition holds, was the first white child born in Newtown, is buried there, and the renowned Dr. Thomas Brooks of Brookfield also.

The next cemetery was established in the opposite part of the growing settlement, in Zoar, and was a private enterprise. Samuel Adams in 1767 sold an acre and a half out of the lands of the great Zoar farm to a group of citizens of the district. Three years later the Town voted “that the farm called Zoar shall have the old burying cloth, and that the selectmen shall proceed to procure a new one for the use of the town.” This refers to the pall which was draped over the dead when, often interred without coffins, they were carried on farm wagons to their graves.

The Taunton cemetery, made up by two purchases of land totalling 64 square rods, was set aside in 1787.

The Huntingtown cemetery was also established that year, the forty-eight square rods of ground being sold “for the sole purpose of a burying ground so long as it should be used for that purpose.”

The same stipulation was made when half an acre in Sandy Hook was sold for \$60.00 in 1810 by Abijah Merritt to the Selectmen of Newtown. The Sandy Hook Cemetery Association which cares for it now, was formed in 1923.

To the list of the burying grounds in the Town should be added two in the Flat Swamp district, both of which have been unused for many years. One was a private family lot, the other was shared by the neighborhood.

Bradley cemetery in Half Way River district is very small and was established solely for family use, as was also the Platt cemetery on Hattertown Road, not far from Morgan's Four Corners.

The 1820 burying ground in Botsford (Cold Spring) is another which began as a family reservation but soon was thrown open for public use.

The little cemetery in Hopewell district on Poverty Hollow Road, near the Redding line, carries the sinister tradition that it was set aside, as far from the center of Town as could be, for the burial of victims of smallpox.

St. Rose cemetery, consecrated in 1862, has been enlarged several times and is described more fully in a later chapter.

MILL WHEELS BEGIN TO TURN

It was not only care of the dead but the needs of the living which had to be met at the earliest period of the new settlement's existence. A grist mill was of vital importance to the colony, but its erection seemed to run into difficulties. Without a local mill, farmers had to grind their own grain with mortar and pestle (which probably meant that the farmers' wives did the grinding), or the grain had to be transported on horseback or by river to mills in Danbury or Stratford.

In the year 1711 it was "voted that Benjamin Sherman, Ebenezer Prindle and Samuel Sanford should view ye pond (Taunton) and see if it would contain a grist mill." Jeremiah Turner was elected to build the mill, and forty acres adjoining it were granted to him. For some reason Turner did not build, and a year later the colony induced Samuel Sanford "to get a grist mill upon ye Pond Brook", and grind sufficient supplies for the fifty families then in Newtown. But again the undertaking failed. Finally in 1714 a committee agreed with Sanford and his heirs and assigns forever to erect a grist mill "for ye youse of ye Town at ye bend of ye brook commonly called Pohtertuck Brook", and no other grist mill was to be built "to ye damage of sd Sanford so long as he doth supply ye sd Town with good mills." Evidently the matter was concluded satisfactorily because the grist mill does not come to our attention again for a number of years, and then it is when a welfare problem apparently had presented itself in connection with one of Sanford's heirs and assigns. The record for October 6, 1740 reads that three men "shall be a committee for ye building a house for ye keeping Job Sanford in when said

Sanford hath his fits,” and to “see that the Incombs be paid to such person as shall keep Job Sanford & also to Keep sd mill in Good repare at ye cost of ye Town.” The end of the story comes in 1741 when a committee is appointed to sell land conveyed by the *late* Job Sanford to the Selectmen of Newtown.

Next to food came the need for shelter, and the erection of a saw mill occupied the Town officials early in 1712. In March permission was given to “get a Saw mill on ye deep Brook South of ye Town”, and the next year another was built “on ye Half Way River, so called, North west of Darby down near Stratford, or on Pohtatook River—provided they will saw for ye town to ye halves all such timber and logs as ye inhabitants shall bring for two shillings sixpence in pay” and also that they should have “convenient passage to ye Great River.”

Still more mills were permitted that busy year, another saw mill on the rushing Pohtatuck Brook “anywhere within 60 rods of the Great River,” and Joseph Dudley was granted liberty “to have a fulling mill on the Deep Brook above the sawmill provided he do not damnify the saw mill.” “Fulling” is a process of shrinking and finishing woolen cloth:—cloth woven of course, by the women of the settlement.



“YE WORK OF YE MINISTRY AMONG US”

One of the first duties of the Town Fathers was to secure the services of a minister:— a non-conformist of Presbyterian (nowadays we would use the distinction “Congregationalist”) persuasion. Accordingly, at that first Town Meeting held on Sept. 24, 1711, at the house of Town Clerk Hubbell, it was “Voted to invite Mr Phineas Fisk for six months trial as minister to settle among us.”

As one looks back through the years on this endeavor there are a number of puzzling aspects concerning it. Over and over again at Town Meetings the people of Newtown made generous offers to induce Mr. Fisk to come. They voted to give him a Petition Right to the land, to build him a house 40ft. by 20, 2 storeys high and 16ft. between joists. Also to provide a comfortable house until his own was built. They offered yearly supplies of wood, to move his family and goods without charge, to fence, clear and plant four acres, as well as a “salary” increasing to 60 pounds in the sixth year. Still he seemed to keep the Town in a state of uncertainty, and finally after two years the officials sought advice from other ministers and decided to give up Mr. Fisk. Upon investigation it appears that the gentleman was not an ordained minister at all at the time when Newtown was urging him to take the post, and was only a tutor in Yale College, then located at Saybrook. At this late date the episode is difficult to understand.

Apparently undaunted by this experience, in April 1713, the Town authorized Ebenezer Smith to go all the way to Wethersfield to “treat with Mr. Thomas Tousey and request him to preach a Sabbath or two with us.”

A good impression was evidently made, for a month later the Town voted to pay 30 pounds salary and to "sow all ye minister's home lot provided Mr. Tousee preach ye Gospel Amongst us a year." By November Mr. Tousey was asked to "carry on ye work of ye ministry in this place as long as God shall grant him life and health."

Many Town Records follow, concerning salary and the value of wood, grain, etc., when paid in lieu of money to the minister. Years went by and after awhile difficulties developed, until in 1724 Mr. Tousey was invited to quit his post because "Ye Major part of ye Inhabitants could not sit easy under him." On leaving Newtown he went to England, gave up the ministry and became a Captain in the King's Army. Later he returned to Newtown as a civilian, undertook the practice of medicine, and lived here until his death in 1761. A colorful character, he was a leader in civic affairs all his life and held many positions of public responsibility.

"A MEETING HOUSE TO SERVE GOD IN"

With their lands laid out and planted, the mills running busily and negotiations for a minister under way, the Proprietors could turn their efforts toward erecting a Meeting House for religious services. This was undertaken in the fall of 1713 when the usual "committy" was appointed—(our forebears staunchly supported the principle that two or more heads are wiser than one), and the members were authorized to hire workmen and put up a building "40 foot long and 32 foot between Joynts." Something went amiss, however, because we wait until 1718 to read that Thomas Scidmore offered to build the Meeting House for 45 pounds, "the sides with clabbord and the ruff with short shingles." It was agreed in 1719 that "where the lane that runs easterly and westerly intersects the maine town street that runs northerly and southerly shall be ye place to set ye meeting house for carrying on ye public worship of God." Until the building was finished, religious services were held in people's houses and the owners were properly compensated.

All the inhabitants were taxed for the support of the Church and attendance was compulsory. Punishment for absence was a fine of five shillings or "to sit in ye stocks for one hour." The building, when completed, was very simple, unheated and with little light. Plain board benches served as seats. Observance of Sunday was an all-day affair with both morning and afternoon services and hours-long sermons. An interval of one and a quarter hours at noon provided some relief, and brought about the erection of "Sabbath Day Houses", about which more, later.

Over the years repairs and alterations were made in the Meeting House, but it was a long while before the board benches gave way to "fationable

pews", and the gallery stairs and floor were laid. By 1746 we find the parishioners "rectifying the underpinning and putting on good, fine boards on the gables." Finally that year they built the "bell free." A little later a tax of twelve pence on the pound was laid on the townspeople for further finishing the galleries and plastering overhead.

It was nearly fifteen years, however, before the steeple was added, much higher than the present one. Then one fine day in 1762 Capt. Amos Botsford and Lt. Nathaniel Briscoe promised "that at their own cost and charge they would procure a good bell, fit to hang in ye steeple." At the same time the steeple was made fit for the bell, the condition of the gift being "to complete ye sd steeple for the outside of the meeting house, culler it and culler ye pulpit."

The bell marks a great innovation in the Town, because up to now the people had been summoned to Church services by Stephen Parmalee and his drum, but now it was to be the ringing of the new bell which would bring them to the Meeting House, the Town House, or to any public gathering. Poor Stephen appears to have lost his job, for we read that it was "voted that Abel Botsford should be bellringer for ye year ensuing, and shall have for his services for ringing ye bell and sweeping ye meeting house, 40 shillings a year."

The bell was re-cast and hung again in 1767. It is pleasant to know that "nearly a fifth of the whole cost" was contributed by ye Church of England society. The bell is inscribed "The Gift of Capt. Amos Botsford and Lieutenant Briscoe, 1768." For nearly two hundred years its sweet tones have sounded over the hills of Newtown.

No one knows when the famous cock took his high perch on the top of the Church steeple. (Both Town and Church records are tantalizingly silent about so many things we should like to know.) But an almost identical weathervane on the Episcopal Church in Stratford was made by a goldsmith there in 1743. Newtown had gold and silver smiths too. Zibah Blakeslee practised his craft at the head of Main Street. It might not be too risky to guess that our cock was made right here in Town, if he did not fly up from Stratford.

The tradition that the bullet holes which riddle him were made by the French soldiers as they passed through Town in 1781 is probably not based on fact. It is believed that these troops under Rochambeau's command were too well disciplined to commit such an act. But the same cannot be said for the British soldiers who occupied Newtown at an earlier date, and they may be the culprits. Or even, as has been suggested, local bad boys with "gunns or muskitts."

The present Church, actually the second structure, was begun about 1808 with the proceeds of a not too-successful lottery sanctioned by the State Assembly. From then to the present day the history of the venerable Church is fully recounted in the parish records.

THE SABBATH DAY HOUSE

These unique features of colonial life were snug little buildings which the Town permitted a citizen who lived at a distance, to erect along the highways near the Meeting House. For example, on December 9, 1740 it was "Voted and agreed that Jeremiah Northrop shall have liberty to set a small Sabbath Day house in ye lane by Capt. Baldwin's orchard."

During the one-and-a-quarter hour interval permitted between the morning and afternoon services, the families retired to these small houses. Usually divided into separate sections for men and women, they provided warmth and the opportunity for rest and refreshment, and a meal brought from home. In the records of the old Church, the term "Sabbaday" is nearly always used, so evidently that is how the early Newtowners spoke of their cozy little retreats. Some were used in common by friends, others were strictly family affairs.

How much the restless children and tired mothers must have enjoyed the "Sabbaday" House! Although conduct was strictly regulated and the children were not permitted "to sporte or playe", at least they could relax for awhile before returning to the chilling atmosphere of the Meeting House. One wonders whether the morning sermon was the only subject discussed during the midday interval, or if the men may have compared notes on crops and "made sly bargains in the sale of horses, cows, pigs, etc." It is certain that the babies, nursed, changed and comforted, returned to the Meeting House in a mood to sleep contentedly until the service came to a close.

"YE LAY-OUT OF YE COUNTRY ROAD"

As has been noted, at the first business meeting of the Town in 1711 a committee was appointed, their duty being to allot land for highways. The Town Street had been laid out in 1709 with the original Home Lots bordering it. This road was unquestionably part of the trail of the Scatikook and Pohtatuck Indians who for centuries had traversed all this section, and yearly made trips down to Long Island Sound to enjoy the sea food.

The Town was planned with two highways crossing the "maine" street. The Northerly Cross Highway or East-West Highway—extensively used later in the Revolutionary war—was the present Church Hill Road, West St., and Castle Hill Road. The Southerly Cross Highway was the present Glover Avenue and Sugar Street. Some early road names familiar to us today are Queen Street, Head o' Meadow, Point o' Rocks, Brushy Hill and others whose directions are described in the records.

The highways were laid out extraordinarily wide. From the Soldiers' Monument almost to the entrance of the Fairfield State Hospital, the Town Street was made 132 ft. across, the Northerly Cross Highway was 165 ft. wide, the Southerly Cross Highway 132 ft., and the "road for to go to Woodbury," laid out in 1715, was 330 ft. (from beyond Pohtatuck brook). Although the

reason for this great width is unknown, it is assumed that it was for safety; to prevent surprise attacks from any foe. Only wagon trails of course, ran through the broad space, and the sides were used for common purposes—pasturage, woodcutting and the like. In later years, as we know, some of the roads were much reduced in width.

Beyond the limits of the Town itself the first highway laid out (Nov. 14, 1715), was the road to Stratford. How natural that this should have been the first! The Stratford boundary at that time extended as far up as Monroe, only six miles from the center of Newtown. Presumably on the Stratford side a trail of some kind continued, linking the townships. To many of the new settlement, Stratford was the “home place”. What a comfort it must have been to those courageous—but surely sometimes homesick—pioneers, to have a road, no matter how crude, blazed through the wilderness. No one would get lost now trying to get down to left-behind families, old friends and familiar scenes.

The language of the early road surveys is quaint. “—and so toward ye Single Pine to a bunch of stones upon a rock, 20 rods wide”. Our Route 34 seems to have begun thus: “Nov. 18, 1715. We laid out Darbee road from ye going over sd brook (Pohtatuck) by ye side of it, upon ye east side till we come to a path that leads to Freegrace Adams 60 acre pitch. Also that path we laid 20 rods wide.”

Travel across rivers and brooks was by fords or by the crudest bridges. There were at least four fording places over the Housatonic: two in what we call Hanover District, one across to Woodbury about where the Rochambeau bridge is now, and another lower down the river, to Oxford. Travelers crossed at their own risk.

In 1733 Peter Hubbell was granted permission to operate a ferry to Woodbury. The fares were three pence for a man or a horse, eight pence for a man and loaded horse, “ox or other kine, three pence half-penny, hog or goat one half penny.” We know that by 1781 a “pole” bridge crossed the river. It must have been considered a great advance in transportation.

Toll gates in Newtown were erected much later and are described in another chapter.

THE FIRST TOWN HOUSE

With land divisions, mills, roads, settling a minister and building a Meeting House under way, our indefatigable forebears felt that it was time to do something about a place for secular gatherings and for education; hence on October 9, 1717 it was voted that a school house or town house should forthwith be built. This was to be located on the main street, betwixt Abraham Kimberly’s and John Lake’s houses, near “ye northeast corner of ye cross road yt leads to Pohtatuck brook.”

Our friend Peter Hubbell—a versatile man!—was to be one of the builders, but he was not to be paid until upon “compleating sd work, workmanlike.” This building was used as Town House and schoolhouse for sixteen years.

By 1733 the population had increased sufficiently to justify a larger Town House, so at the request of the citizens of the Middle District for a schoolhouse of their own, the old Town House was moved at their expense to a location further south on the main street, where it continued in service for many years more.

A second Town House was built in 1766. Business and Town Meetings had been held in one schoolhouse or another until then. Oliver Tousey (descendant of the Rev. Thomas), was authorized to build it for 66 pounds, but he was required to give bonds on the contract. It was stipulated that Tousey should provide good seats as are generally made “in form as in the State House in Hartford.” Newtown was getting pretty stylish.

The picturesque brick building on Main Street, across from the Library, is often mistakenly referred to as “the old Town Hall”. It never served that purpose, but for many years was the office of the Probate Court and of the Town Clerk. It contained a fireproof stone vault in which the Town Records were kept.

The next Town Hall was a large building on the site of our present one. This was bought by the Town in 1882 and had been used as a Church by the Roman Catholics, who in turn had bought it from the Universalists. In 1917 it was considered “a large and commodious building that is likely to continue (except in case of fire) Newtown’s town house for at least a century to come.”

But what a far cry from that first Town House, “25 foot square and eight foot between joists,” to the magnificent Edmond Town Hall which we are privileged to possess today!

THE QUIOMPH PURCHASE

Newtown was flourishing in 1723 when a Pohtatuck Indian named Quiomph appeared before the Town Fathers and announced that he was the owner of a tract of land in Sandy Hook which had never been included, so far as he was concerned, in the purchase in 1705 by the three speculators. The area in question ran from an “elbow” in the Housatonic “right against ye Wigwams”, along “ye brook called ‘Hucko’ by the Indians (Pohtatuck) to where ye brook comes down between ye hills”—our own beautiful Rocky Glen. Not included in this sale was a “corner of intervale land lying by ye river where Cockshure’s fence is.” This was probably the level stretch of bottom land where the Pohtatuck enters the Housatonic. It was near the Indian campsite which can still be identified further up the river and which soon will be inundated by the waters of Shepaug Lake.

There were then fifty-one Proprietors of the Town and between them

they bought the tract from Quiomph for sixteen pounds and disposed of the land among themselves. This time the transaction was entirely legal and above board. We find Massumpas appearing again, as a witness to the sale. Perhaps it was he who advised Quiomph to demand payment in solid British pounds, instead of ruffelly coats and blankitts, as in the purchase of 1705.

TOWN BOUNDARIES

It must have been evidence of growing pains of the new community that in the early years there were many disputes over the Town boundaries. The first, in 1725, concerned the line between Newtown and Stratford. A committee was appointed to meet with a similar one from Stratford and was authorized, if agreement could not be reached, to appoint "three uninterested gentlemen" to arbitrate. The boundary was mutually agreed upon in 1725, but was not finally confirmed by the General Court until 1761. The line is the present one which divides Newtown from Monroe and Trumbull.

On the opposite end of Town also the boundary was causing friction. By 1731 New Milford brought legal action against Newtown for "neglecting to perambulate ye line", and Capt. Thomas Tousey was appointed to represent Newtown before the Superior Court in New Haven. The General Assembly was requested to send an impartial committee to study the matter, and the two Towns appear to have accepted their survey, because in December of 1734 the controversy was satisfactorily settled.

Brookfield also caused trouble to the Newtown community. With the original purchase of 1705 Brookfield (as we know it now) was included in the boundaries of Newtown. About 1751 the inhabitants of the "West Farm" and "Whiskenere" sections expressed their desire to join Danbury and New Milford to form an Ecclesiastical Society. (After all, they were very far from the Meeting House in the center of our village). However, Newtown presented powerful opposition in the General Assembly and conceded only that the North End citizens need not pay to support the Newtown minister, provided that they would take care of one in their own district. Whereupon they engaged the Rev. Thomas Brooks, who developed so large and so devoted a following that the parish—first called "Newbury" (combining in its name *Newtown* and *New Milford* with *Danbury*)—preferred to consider itself "Brook's field", the origin of the name we know today. The disagreements continued until 1788, when Newtown relinquished its claim and the parish of Newbury was incorporated as the Town of Brookfield.

Our neighbor to the west also figured in arguments about the establishment of Newtown's boundaries. The usual committee to study the matter was appointed in 1758 to meet with one from Danbury and "to perambulate, re-

new and erect ye boundaries.” The description of ye boundaries seems so ingenuous to us these days, when the relocation of Route 6 is a matter of concern to so many of us, and we are so aware of boundary lines, surveys and the like, that one cannot refrain from quoting a word or two: “We agreed to renew such boundaries by putting stones to it, which was and is a small ditch. The next monument which is a red or black oak tree with stones to it, then on to a heap of stones, adding to it more stones—” and so forth. Perhaps today’s Highway Commission would find such a survey not altogether satisfactory in determining boundaries, but since they have endured for nearly two hundred years, it must have its merits.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

It was not long after Newtown had adjusted itself to the taxes and problems presented by the Quiomph Purchase and to the uncertain boundary lines, that we find the Town struggling with “difficult circumstances” concerning the established Church.

The minister who had been called to follow Mr. Thomas Tousey was the Rev. Mr. John Beach, a young man from Stratford. He was evidently of a charming and forceful personality and was much loved by his parishioners. Unhappily for all concerned, about 1732 the Rev. Mr. Beach became unsure in his own mind of the validity of ordination in the Congregational Church and resigned his parish. The Town Records of the time show clearly the distress and prayerful seeking for guidance of the townspeople in this situation. However, firm in his convictions, Mr. Beach left home and family, sailed for the Mother Country and was ordained in the Church of England. It should be understood that there had always been in Connecticut a very large following loyal to the Church of England, people whose religious thinking was entirely unlike that of the non-conformist, independent Puritan. There was a powerful aristocratic contingent in early Connecticut which remained true to the old religious adherence, as it did later, to the Tory viewpoint in political affiliations. However, the established Church of the Colony, which everyone was required by taxes to support, regardless of his own faith, was the Congregational denomination. Nothing could have been more disrupting to the peaceful life of the community than to have the well-loved minister change his allegiance from one persuasion to another.

Needless to say, this action caused bitter personal situations with some of the less tolerant townspeople when Mr. Beach returned shortly as a missionary preacher assigned to Newtown and Redding. The feeling against him was so strong that the story goes that some of his former parishioners incited the

Indians to plague him. One time during his absence a band of them invaded his home. The small children were terrified, but the courageous eldest daughter gathered them together, hid the family silver under her voluminous skirts, and refused to give any information as to the whereabouts of her father.

The first service of the Church of England conducted by the Rev. Mr. Beach was under an immense buttonball tree near the corner of Main Street and Glover Avenue. A tablet marks the site today. In Redding a different sort of memorial commemorates this fearless preacher: bullet holes in the old Church, reminders of an attempt on his life when he persisted in praying for the King of England close to the outbreak of the Revolution.

Tradition places the location of the first Episcopal Church in Newtown close to the buttonball tree referred to above. The building, 28 x 24 ft. was framed, raised and enclosed on a Saturday and the following day the workers assembled for service "sitting on timbers and kneeling on the ground."

We know that a second Church was erected in 1746, further up the street, on the west side, and called Trinity then: but since this was not the recognized Church of the Colony and was not built at the expense of the Town, the Records have no report upon it. Near the end of the 18th century the Episcopalians were granted permission to move the Congregational Meeting House across the street to about the site of the present Church, and to build for themselves a new Church close to where the present Trinity now stands. Moving the Meeting House was considered such a daring undertaking that people from far and wide were invited to come and witness it. Accordingly, on June 13, 1792 the Meeting House, steeple and all, was successfully moved a distance of eight rods in one and a half hours. A Divine Providence must have kept a gracious eye on the operation.

In 1793 the new Church was consecrated by Bishop Samuel Seabury, the first Episcopal Bishop in America. The famous Glebe House in Woodbury is indelibly associated with his valiant career. For many years this Episcopal Church was the largest in the State.

The present Trinity Church was built a long time later, in 1870.



MORE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

By 1726 Newtown was faced by the demand for a schoolhouse at the north end of the Town. The settlement was growing. The need for schools was evident, for this is the record by the Town Clerk, presumably considered an educated man: "Att a lawful towns Meeting of ye Inhabitants of Newtown Held November ye 29th 1726 Then Unanimously agreed and voted by ye Inhabitants before sd That there shall be a free Schooll Set up and Maintained in Sd Town for ye benifit of ye Children of the Town for ye Space of Three Munths and that ye chrges of said School shall be refund or paid out of ye Town Rate and the whole a fair of ye School is Left with ye Comitee that shall be Consarned in ye Affair above sd."

Ye Comitee erected a building for fourteen pounds near the house of Abraham Bennitt. Those who could not pay the tax of two pence a pound on their estates were permitted to turn in the equivalent value in wheat, rye, corn, etc. at so much a bushel.

The Selectmen were authorized to engage a schoolmaster "so long as ye overplus money in ye Town rate will support it." The term increased from "ye space of three munths" to four, five or six, and was supported partly by the Town and partly by the "schoolers," or by private subscription.

The settlement kept on growing, which led to the establishment of the school Districts. Always there was a local committee to direct the building and administering of each school and the hiring of a teacher.

The following list records the founding of the Districts. The details of their organization are available to the student, as well as the many changes

and consolidations which occurred as time passed: Taunton, 1738; Zoar, 1745; Land's End ("Whiskenear"), 1745; Palestine, 1748; Hanover, 1755; South Center (Kettletown, later Tinkerfield), 1761; Deep Brook, 1767; Slut's Hill (Mt. Pleasant), 1768; Lake George (perhaps so called by combining the names of two local residents, Lake and George), 1768; Flat Swamp, 1769; Pohtatuck (Sandy Hook), 1779; Bear Hills (not "Bare:" the animals ranged around there), 1783; Gray's Plain, 1784; Head o' Meadow, 1784; Wapping, 1786; Half Way River (originally known as "Ragged Corner"), 1786; Gregory's Orchard, 1788; Walker's Farms (now part of Monroe), 1789; Toddy Hill (Botsford), 1789; Huntingtown, 1794, (united the next year with Bear Hills District, when the provision was made that "the children of Justus Sherwood and William Nickerson Taylor be not taxed for firewood and boarding the schoolmaster"); Walnut Tree Hill, 1886, a Johnny-Come-Lately, combining sections of Sandy Hook, Pohtatuck and Hanover Districts. This arrangement was largely brought about because of the increase in school population due to the influx of workers employed by the great New York Belting and Packing Company of Sandy Hook.

The schools were under the over-all management of the Selectmen. Many other means beside Town taxes were drawn upon for their support—even liquor licenses! A boon was granted in 1795, when the Connecticut State School Fund was established. This came to pass by the sale of State-owned lands in the Western Reserve in Ohio. The territory had been claimed by Connecticut under her Charter of 1642 from the Crown, which granted Connecticut land "limited East and West by the Sea." The proceeds of the sale were distributed among the Towns for purposes of education, and the fund is still in existence. Another source of aid to the public schools might be mentioned here, although it came much later (in the 1830's), the Town Deposit Fund. This was Connecticut's share of a surplus—(actually!)—in the national Treasury.

With funds available, the Selectmen were relieved of much of the burden in administration of the schools. The Newtown School Society was formed in 1796 and took control for some forty years.

By 1839 the School Districts were granted powers to elect their own officers and to levy taxes, and for three-quarters of a century this was the method employed. Probably only in Connecticut could such a poor system have endured so long. Always a conservative State, not given to change, perhaps she prided herself on possessing qualities like unto her own grey stone walls; solid, fixed, uncompromising.

As the years passed, each District in the Town became to a large extent self-contained, like a collection of separate villages. Many had their own Church, a mill or factory and a store or two, as well as a School. The Districts continued to set their own courses of study, and although there was a Central Board of School Visitors, their recommendations appear to have been as often resented as followed.

How the teachers made out is hard to comprehend. In 1842, Polly Beers was paid \$1.50 per week. In 1846 the North Center School hired Hannah Fairchild at the extravagant sum of \$2.50 per week—but she had to pay her own board. Supplying teachers was indeed a problem. Often the winter term was taught by a farmer with a little education, but the summer session might be in the hands of a very young girl who could claim only a district school training: *but* if she happened to have a relation on the School Board her position was fairly secure. Of course she might be years younger than some of the boys in her classes, but that seemed not to matter.

From the present-day point of view, the schoolrooms of those times were hair-raising. In the early years only a fireplace provided heat, later to be replaced by a central wood-burning stove. Around the walls was a sharply sloping shelf which was used as a desk, too steep to keep the books from sliding off. Ranged in front of this, with their backs to the teacher, the pupils sat on hard wooden benches too high for their feet to rest on the floor. These devices of torture were deliberately designed to keep the young mind on the work at hand. (But did they?—One questions.) As late as 1877 modern desks were voted down in one school; such luxury was no doubt considered degenerating. Drinking-water often had to be fetched in a bucket from the nearest farm, and of course one dipper served everybody's needs. Sanitary arrangements would just better be skipped in this account! The value of firewood was deducted from the tuition of the student providing it, and when it wasn't provided, the school closed. These were the days of the famous McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, and pupils progressed, not by grades, but from Reader to Reader.

Over the long years the history of each District has its own "human interest," but in a brief outline such as this, the hopes, heartbreaks and satisfactions cannot be covered. But one situation in Gray's Plain district is too amusing to omit. About sixty years ago the Committeeman appointed his own daughter to be teacher, and though defeated for his office the next year, he maintained that the young woman was still authorized to hold her position. The incoming administration objected to this, and locked the girl out of the schoolhouse. Nothing daunted, she promptly conducted classes on the steps outside the building with her own brothers and sisters as scholars, the only children who turned up. Her father resented this situation, forced open the schoolhouse door and installed his daughter inside. Whereupon the other faction appeared, (armed, it was accused, with axes), ousted teacher and pupils, and locked up the schoolhouse again. Finally the matter was settled in favor of the newly elected Committee after an expensive lawsuit which kept the school closed for seven months. At last it was re-opened to the blowing of horns, flaunting of placards and general rejoicing throughout the District.

After such a tale, perhaps it is not surprising to learn that dissatisfaction with many of the District Schools caused private institutions to be organized in several parts of Town: Taunton, Main Street and Sandy Hook, each of which continued for varying lengths of time.

The founding of the Newtown Academy in 1837 was brought about by the conviction that education should not stop at the District School level. Money was privately subscribed and the Academy was built on the site of the Newtown Savings Bank. It was immediately popular and flourished with greater or less success and in several different buildings until 1902.

By this time the need for a free public high school was so obvious that the Town rented part of the Academy building and the High School was established. Unfortunately the funds appropriated for education were never sufficient, teachers' salaries were too low and services were non-existent. In 1916 the State Board of Education disapproved of the Newtown school system, a matter of mortification in the Town's history.

About this time many dissatisfied parents withdrew their children and again formed a school of their own. When the High School burned down in 1920, both factions reunited and started afresh in the basement of Trinity Church.

At this point, that Patron Saint of Newtown, Miss Mary Elizabeth Hawley, steps into the picture. Aware of the crisis in the Town's educational system, Miss Hawley in 1922 gave a large sum for the construction of The Hawley School, and Mr. Cornelius B. Taylor donated Taylor Field for a playground at the same time.

With Newtown's educational problems happily solved as of that date, this historical outline of the school system will close.

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

It would seem that Newtown was too remote from the contest of England against the French and Indians in 1757 to be at all concerned by it, but such is not the case. We know that thirty men from the settlement enlisted in the King's forces during that year, and the death of two has been recorded.

Also Newtown was made aware of the struggle for supremacy between the Mother Country and France by a picturesque incident which brought the war home to all. This was the result of the British seizure of Nova Scotia in 1755. The tragic story of the deportation of the Acadians is familiar to most of us through Longfellow's "Evangeline", but it may be a surprise to learn that we had an Evangeline of our own here in Newtown.

When the British wrenched the Acadians from their homes, they scattered some seven thousand or more of them in the Colonies from Maine to Louisiana, and Connecticut was forced to accept her share. Three hundred of the unhappy people who were landed in New Haven were distributed around among the neighboring settlements, and Newtown received a family of husband

and wife, a son and a daughter. At once (April, 1756) the Town appropriated a "sum of suitable measure to provide for the French family dwelling among us," and a few months later a committee was instructed "to take a view and pitch upon a place to build a small house for the neutral French family among us, and to allow them as much land for the use of and benefit of a garden as they shall judge, the Town bearing the expense thereof."

For seven years a Committee "to take care of ye French Paul" provided for the strangers. The son was "bound out" to Zadock Sherman and presumably was taught a trade, as was customary in those days.

The last entry in the Records concerning the family is dated April, 1763. The Town could not send them away nor force them to leave, but in that year it could and did give them "free liberty to move out of Town and go a-visiting their relations or friends."

What became of them? Did they ever return? Did the daughter marry a Newtown boy? We shall never know, but let us hope that Newtown's Evangeline met a happier fate than that of Longfellow's heroine.

"THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN HATH ABDICATED THE GOVERNMENT . . ."

It is tragic that the history of a quiet country Town like ours cannot be told without recording the outbreak of war, with all its attendant disruption and distress.

The revolt against the British Crown of course did not come about suddenly, and Newtown was aware of the gathering storm clouds. But for many of the townspeople the situation was peculiarly unhappy because of the strong Tory sentiment cherished here.

Connecticut has been called "the land of steady habits," and some of the conservative country districts were reluctant to give up loyalty to the Mother Country. In 1770 half of the 350 families in Newtown were members of the Church of England, and other ties were strong. All through the years, largely due to the accessibility to the seaports, Connecticut citizens had not been entirely out of touch with the homeland.

Few decisions could try men's souls more than those faced by our forebears. Evidently they could hardly believe that the situation was actually real, because on March 6, 1775, the Town officials sent a "memorial" to the General Assembly asking if "ye unhappy Diference that now Subsists between the parent State and her colonies" can be true, "or is it all a geast?"

The men of the settlement were not unfamiliar with military practice and discipline. The Train Bands of the Colony had operated since 1650. All men

over sixteen (Church officials excepted) had been taught to bear arms and to "have in continual readiness a good muskitt or other gunn fitt for service." As far back as 1734 the inhabitants were taxed to provide the Town with "pouder, Bullits & flints."

The Tories paid dearly for their loyalty to the King. In several cases people fled to Canada and their property was confiscated. In one instance a husband escaped while his wife remained to struggle with the farm. The brave woman was left unmolested and in this way she saved the property until her husband's return.

The Tories learned to hide their guns (and themselves) under the barn or elsewhere when raiding parties of Continentals descended upon them. A favorite pastime of the raiders was to eat up the food supplies of the household and to poke with bayonets any Tory found in bed.

A letter from General Washington to one of his officers warned that this was "a very disaffected part of the country and the Tories will be desirous to give any information in their power." Shortly before, a Newtown man, Robert Thompson, had been hanged here as a spy. The Records give us no details of the case.

It was reported to the General Assembly in 1775 "that on or about the 23rd day of November, 1775, there were a number of Tories in said Town (Newtown) inimical to the United States; and that about 200 men, the friends of Liberty under the command of Lieut. Col. Ichabod Lewis, proceeded to Newtown and remained there two days, in reducing and disarming said Tories." One can imagine what was meant by "reducing and disarming."

The first Act of the Connecticut General Assembly in October, 1776, was to approve and uphold the Declaration of Independence. Newtown had no representatives listed at that session. Whether none were elected or whether they were Tories and refused to give approval is not known. The Town had been sending delegates to the Assembly since 1747, but an Oath of Fidelity "to the Government established in this State under the authority of the people" was now required of all holding office. Perhaps the pill was too bitter for the Newtown Representatives to swallow.

Although no action of the war took place in Newtown, the burning of Danbury in 1777, the skirmish in New Haven in 1779 and the winter encampment of General Putnam in Redding made every nearby community fully aware of the conflict.

In spite of the Tory sentiment, the Town officially was loyal to the new Government. Many men enlisted in the Continental Army. Caleb Baldwin, Town Clerk like his son after him, (together they served the Town seventy-eight years), was promoted to the rank of Major. The Selectmen carrying on at home, duly handled the problems presented in obtaining the Town's share of salt and of "pigg" iron allotted by the State. Caring for the families of the soldiers was entrusted to Jabez Botsford and Richard Fairman. Another committee (Jabez again, Job Burmill and David Curtis) was authorized to draw on the Town Treasury to provide clothing for the soldiers.

Twice smallpox broke out and the officials had that to cope with too. At first they approved of inoculation as a means to prevent its spread, later the method was "negatived in full in open Town Meeting."

There are several references in the Records to "Unfriendly Persons in Town." Die-hard Tories, presumably, who either held out against the Oath of Fidelity, or who took it under suspicion of insincerity. No quarter was granted even to home-town boys who had joined the British forces: when Nathan and Calvin Turner deserted from the King's Army and returned, they were ordered out of Town.

On the other hand there was "no objection to the wives and Families of Ephraim Betts and Elias Skidmore Repairing to Long Island there to Tarry with their Husbands Going under the Direction of the Authority and Selectmen." Today this sounds like an odd arrangement.

Again and again the Town's quota of men was filled, though sometimes with difficulty. Supplies of flour, beef and pork were packed in barrels and forwarded to the forces in the field, as well as supplied to the fatherless families at home. In 1778 War Loans were solicited. Of the nine contributions from Newtown, two were made by women.

With the surrender of Cornwallis in 1781, the war was brought to a close, but recruits were drawn from Newtown to fill the Army and the State Guard as late as 1783. Gradually the men came home, the fields were planted again, the Town threw off the nightmare of war and accustomed itself once more to the pursuits of peace.



THE FLOWER AND CHIVALRY OF FRANCE IN NEWTOWN

His full name was Maréchal Jean-Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Count de Rochambeau. He was fifty-six. The years had left only wisps of fine graying hair on his freckled skull so that now the scar of an old cavalry saber wound—from the Battle of Minden—was revealed. Somehow, his years had been the hardest of all possible years, yet he was not old, he told himself. Long before he was only Jean Baptiste Donatien and now he was lieutenant general of the armies of France, leader of the most garrulous, dashing, and betitled swarm of young soldiers the world had ever seen; Pontgibaud; du Bourg; Berthier; the Comte de Deux-Ponts; de Chastellux. When chosen to lead them in this secret thrust against Britain, it made him flush now to remember his words: “I swear to serve his Majesty in this commission with all my zeal, until my dying hour.” He was overjoyed to have been rescued from oblivion to lead the armies once more.

He and his division of French troops had spent a very agreeable winter and spring of 1780-1781 in Newport, Rhode Island. In his diary, Berthier recorded his impressions of this new country: “One would not believe a man would ever think of seducing a girl—girls having extraordinary freedom. Their parents continually leave them alone with young men—they kiss without consequences. When two lovers decide they are suited to each other they tell their parents and from that moment are constantly together, even to sitting up half the night talking after their parents have gone to bed—all without taking liberties. In Connecticut it is even the custom for two lovers to retire during the day—especially the evening—and to pass several hours together on

a bed—they call this bundling—and talk over their future happiness. I have gone into several bedrooms and found them thus, which didn't disturb them in the least." Newport was "peopled by honest people of all religions, living simply and without jealousy of any kind. Their blood is extraordinarily pure. All the women are pretty and fresh, which is due to the regularity and sobriety of their life and the very healthy climate." No wonder they regretted leaving this Utopia, but leave they must for orders had come from General Washington to join his forces in his operations against the British.

So the westward march began on June 18th from Providence where they had been camped since the 8th. In all, Rochambeau's forces consisted of six hundred artillery, six hundred cavalry, and thirty-six hundred infantry. The artillery and the infantry made up four regiments, marching a day apart. To set an example, some of his officers walked the long distances at the head of their regiments. The people of the countryside were enthusiastic over his resplendent French army. "Magnificent in appearance, superb in discipline, with banner and music, and all the pride and pomp of war, it passed in four divisions——. They were followed day after day by long lines of baggage-wagons and stout carts bearing chests of silver money guarded by French soldiers." When they reached Hartford, the press was extravagant with praise. "A finer body of men was never in arms, and no army was better furnished with everything necessary for a campaign. The exact discipline of the troops, and the attention of the officers to prevent any injury to individuals have made the march of this army through the country very agreeable to the inhabitants; and it is with great pleasure we assure our readers, not a single disagreeable circumstance has taken place."

While these regiments were on the march through Hartford, Farmington, Middlebury and Woodbury, the cavalry corps of the Duc de Lauzun was covering the left flank to the southward. They passed through Derby, crossed the Naugatuck and Housatonic rivers and struggled up a steep hill into New Stratford (now Monroe). "Weary as the army was with the ascent, an array of six hundred men with all the splendor of gold lace and nodding plumes, the horses bravely caparisoned and the retinue of 'five-cattle teams' that had been hired to convey the heavy baggage was a rare sight." This flanking operation had been timed well, for on the same day, June 28th, Rochambeau and his first regiment reached the Housatonic River at Newtown.

It wasn't as wide nor as deep a river as the Connecticut which they had been ferried across the week before. On the direct line of march was a pole bridge, strong enough for light equipment and the infantry. The heavy equipment must use the fording place. The most difficult pieces were the siege guns and the brass mortars, squat iron buckets that weighed four tons each, standing no more than three feet high, capable of arching a hundred pound iron ball high into the air so it landed with earth shaking force as if dropped vertically from above. The muzzles were plugged, vents capped and eight teams of oxen strained to haul them up the further bank and woeful was the labor with poles and floats when a rolling rock broke a gun carriage wheel.

But cross they did for these guns were necessary in Washington's plan to reduce Clinton's fortifications around New York and capture the city.

As the troops and equipment made the crossing they took the road directly away from the river, past apple orchards and farms somewhat reminiscent of Normandy except for the stone walls that had lined the road all the way from Providence and through fields rippling with ripening wheat and that strange grain, maize, or corn, as some called it. The scouts were directing the army to Newtown, to the camping ground in the meadows southwest of the village.

On the evening of June 28th, Count Rochambeau was established in the Inn across the road from the church with a pock-marked rooster weathervane. He had met the local citizens with their strange foreign names like Beardslee, Fairchild, Brisco.

Intermittently for three days the troops marched past the Inn. Rochambeau was proud of his men—they had obeyed his orders and there had been no trouble with the citizenry in all the long march. As he watched them come up the hill from the river he realized that they made a thrilling spectacle for these country people. The splendor of the uniforms must be beyond their imagining—the Bourbonnais in black and red, the Saintonge in white and green, Royal Deux-Ponts in white and the artillery in blue with red facings, white spatter dashes and red pompons. Even their hats, peaked fore and aft, were different from the American three-cornered cocked hat.

As the troops passed, summer sun glistening on the cannons, Rochambeau considered his many problems. Had he adequately guarded all approaches to the town? What did it signify that Clinton had moved troops from Long Island to New York? Would a force of British be moved up the coast by boat to Fairfield, marched overland twenty miles to strike him in his present disorganized state? Would this strange new war be decided by a battle at this backwoods town of Newtown?

It had been tentatively planned that Washington would meet him at Newtown, and in fact the general had already moved his army from West Point across the river to the east bank of the Hudson some fifty miles away. Why hadn't he received word from Washington?

Which was the better plan, to lay siege to New York, reduce Clinton's fortifications with his so laboriously moved cannon and the guns of de Grasse's ships of line, and attack with their combined twenty or thirty thousand soldiers? Or should the combined armies dash madly south some five hundred miles as that boy Lafayette wanted and capture Cornwallis in Virginia? Neither plan looked too feasible, but then in a war of maneuver over vast distances, nothing ever looked too feasible.

Would the wheelwrights be able to repair the rolling equipment—how long would it take to regroup his army—how much food could the town fathers supply? A knock on the door. A young Continental officer—ah, news from Washington.

“Lieutenant Colonel David Cobb with dispatches from General Washington.”

“Yes, Colonel.” A mere boy, and a colonel? The dust on his uniform he could understand, but did it have to be so threadbare? Well, maybe the Americans could use some of the 6,000,000 livres coming from France on new uniforms for the staff officers. “You will find refreshments in the dining room”—they didn’t call him “Papa” Rochambeau for nothing. And now the dispatch.

Camp near Peekskill, 27 June 1781

Sir: I have the honor of receiving your Excellency’s favor of the 23rd instant from Hartford. It would have given me the greatest pleasure could I have made it convenient to meet you at Newtown, but independently of many arrangements which are necessary at the first taking of the field, I am detained by the hourly expectation of the Chevalier-de-la-Lauzun. I am pleased to find that your idea of the position which will be proper for the troops under your command coincides with my own and I shall be happy in giving your quartermaster general every assistance in reconnoitering and making out your camp. Lieutenant Col Cobb, one of my aids-de-camp, will have the honor of delivering this letter and will return to me with any dispatch or message your Excellency may wish to communicate, or should you rather incline to come forward from Newtown before the army Col Cobb will be proud to attend you. I shall be much obliged if your Excellency will present to Count de Barras by the next occasion my sincere thanks for the readiness with which he was pleased to accept the proposition I had the honor to make him through your Excellency. I am, &c.,

George Washington

The Count de Rochambeau

On June 30th an urgent dispatch arrived from Washington requesting that Rochambeau “push on his troops with greater haste than he now intends, and by a different route from that now in view” in order to participate in a surprise maneuver. The utmost secrecy was urged due to the Tory elements about.

Reply:

Newtown, June 30, 1781

Sir: I was at Count de Rochambeau’s this evening when I received your Excellency’s dispatches. General Chastellux was immediately sent for, and the heads of departments consulted on the new intended route of the Army. The Count inquired whether your Excellency was acquainted with the removal of the Yagers and some other troops

from Long Island to New York. I assured his Excellency was perfectly acquainted with it and all the other movements of the enemy at New York and that your Excellency would never undertake a matter of this kind but upon certain intelligence and the surest ground of success. The Count was perfectly satisfied with the plan proposed and assured me that duty as well as inclination prompted him to comply with your Excellency's wishes. Orders are accordingly given for the march of the first brigade in the morning, and the Duke's legion which is now at New Stratford will undoubtedly march at the time proposed, 12 o'clock.

The rest of the army will follow when the other division arrives which comes up to-morrow. The Count in his letter wishes an answer from your Excellency by to-morrow night. It would be more agreeable if it came sooner. I am, &c.,

David Cobb

His Excellency General Washington

Peekskill

On July 1, the French army broke camp in Newtown and proceeding westward joined Washington's army on July 6, at Phillipsburg, New York.

Later this same year, after Cornwallis surrendered, French troops again passed through Newtown.

One hundred and seventy-three years later, on June 26th, 1954, a modern bridge, spanning the Housatonic River, close to the historic fording place, was named the Rochambeau Bridge and dedicated as a tribute to the French for their contribution to American independence.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE 1700'S

Life in Newtown during the 18th Century was much the same as that of any quiet inland village. The people were not out of touch, however, with the larger cities or the seaports. The sessions of the General Assembly, meeting alternately in New Haven and Hartford were a source of great interest, and the wars of course gave some of the men glimpses of far places.

On the whole the Town occupied itself with its own affairs, exploring and developing its natural resources. In 1738 it acted to conserve its supplies of oak, walnut and chestnut trees, by limiting by law the size at which they could be cut. The luxuriant timber growth was a large factor in the Town's economy. Chestnut was used for framing houses, oak for floors. Later fine furniture was made in Bradleyville—or Ragged Corner (now Half-Way River district), from locally-grown trees. Cherry was considered the most desirable wood for this purpose. According to tradition, the best source of supply was Gregory's orchard.

In 1764 a mining venture was undertaken. A number of citizens of Sandy Hook agreed to lease the cliffs in Rocky Glen, near the Black Bridge, to a New York prospector for forty years, with permission "if need be, to dig to the center of the earth"—alas, with no profitable results.

The missionary spirit flourished in the first half of the century. It must have been on the Town's conscience that the few remaining Indians among them were "inclined to hunting, drinking and excessive idleness." In 1742 a grant of twenty-five pounds was made by the General Court for "instruction and Christianizing Indians at the place called Pohtatuck." We have no record of their conversion, but the effort occupied the ministry and presumably interested the Town.

There were always welfare problems to contend with. Many instances are recorded. Samuel Hendrix in 1745 was released from paying taxes for a year in consideration of his keeping his aged mother; arrangements were made to pay anyone sixteen shillings a week each for caring for Thadeus and Pheneas Lyon, "Idiots or Distracted men," and to "let out Nathaniel Parmalee to be kept at charge of the town as cheap as possible."

The Selectmen had problems of a different nature, too. They voted to relinquish a fine against Ivany Taylor for card playing, they met to settle the dispute with Mr. Abm. Ferriss in respect to "the Interest his late wife brought with her into this Town in a manner as they would was it their own private concern," and they notified the Town on March 5, 1772 that they would "consider what method may be thought proper to take concerning Matthew Croofoot's Intrigue with the Widow Parmalee." In this last, the Records serve us right for being inquisitive—nothing more is told!

It may be a surprise to learn that Newtown had a number of slave owners. In 1756 there were twenty-three slaves in Town, and we know that as early as 1735 slaves were held here. They were valued like other household effects, bought, sold and disposed of by will. Also they were frequently emancipated

by their owners. The Abolition movement was not popular in Fairfield County, but long before Lincoln's Proclamation, slavery had been abolished in Connecticut. Newtown's latest record relating to them is in 1804. Whether they were field hands or house servants is not made clear. One might hope that it was mostly the latter, for the housewives of those days could have done with a little help.

The enormous fireplaces, huge iron kettles and wooden washtubs are picturesque, but to work with them was another matter. The only factor offsetting the labor of cooking in those days must have been the delicious freshness of everything that was used. Eggs, cream and butter obtained that very day, fruit picked from the trees, vegetables pulled from the garden and bread baked in the brick ovens—no wonder they are remembered as “the good old days!”

Our foremothers were adept in the use of herbs, a device recently revived in favor, and the old houses were fragrant with the aromatic bunches hanging upside down to dry under the sloping rafters.

Some Newtown women were especially proficient in various skills. “Aunt Park” in Hattertown and a Negress named Phyllis who lived near her, knew the medicinal qualities of the plants they grew in their gardens, or found in wood or field, and the remedies they made from them were highly esteemed. Mrs. Nichols was unusually skilled in embroidery and quilting, and her hexagon and star-patterned quilts still withstand the years. Mrs. Roberts of Toddy Hill was renowned for a snake-oil remedy which she prepared for the cure of inflammations, and so it goes. Curiously enough, certain women were heavily taxed for what was called their “faculty”. We do not know just what their abilities were, but it is safe to assume that midwifery and nursing skill were among them.

All taxes of those days seem high to us. Samuel Sherman made brooms and was taxed \$150.00 on the assessed valuation of his business. Oxen, horses, sheep were all taxed. Of course the land was the chief source of Town revenue, but poll taxes of \$30.00 were levied on those eighteen to twenty, and \$60.00 on the twenty-one to seventy year-olds. Houses, chimneys, window panes, fireplaces, mirrors, watches—all had to be paid for. At one time even the Churches were assessed and taxed.

It is a tradition that Dodgingtown came by its name because it lay within the area which for a long time was claimed by both Newtown and Bethel. When the Newtown tax collectors appeared, the citizens claimed vehemently that they were Bethel residents: when the Bethel agents turned up, everybody insisted that he was a Newtowner. Nobody could prove anything while the boundaries were undetermined, so the dodging continued successfully.

Descriptions of Colonial life are so familiar that we need not go any further in this brief outline. All the early settlements went through similar struggles with Nature, with their fellow men and with conflicting convictions. But not all of them were blessed with so much beauty as is Newtown's.



“YE FLOCK OF SHEEP FEEDING ON SD COMMONS”

Raising sheep was one of Newtown's first industries, for the animals were an absolute necessity to the well-being of the settlers.

The wool was washed, spun into yarn and knit or woven into garments and blankets. Coats and breeches made from the skin gave welcome protection from the icy winds of New England's winter. The tallow provided soap and candles, and also greased the boots, while ravenous appetites were satisfied with lamb roasted on a spit in front of the great fireplaces.

As far back as 1732 provision for a Town flock was undertaken by the Selectmen. Each farmer was assigned an ear mark for the identification of his stock and a fence viewer and a field driver (or “hayward”) were elected, as they had been years before at the first Town Meeting. A Town Shepherd also was appointed to tend the sheep which grazed on the wide roadsides, these good stretches of public land being known as “commons”. At the 1732 Meeting it was voted “that the Commons should be cleared for the benefit of the flock of sheep where it shall be thought to be most needful by those who are appointed by law to take care of that work.” A Ram Pasture was enclosed on the low-lying land extending from Sugar Street to beyond Hawley Pond. After about fifty years the Proprietors divided up this fertile spot among themselves.

Swine were also “free commoners”, but they were a constant source of trouble and the Records are full of measures taken to control their depredations. In 1737 the Town Meeting decided that the creatures should be “ringed or yoked, by sufficient yoking to be understood a yoke 9 inches above ye neck,



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4 inches below ye neck, 6 inches long on each side of ye neck if on grown Swine and proportionately for lesser. Swine so yoked not to be deemed damage feasant." Some years later they were considered so troublesome to the well-doing of sheep that "finding that the swine do dig up ye commons so that it is a great damage to ye flock of sheep feeding on sd commons, which to prevent, it is voted that all swine from 10 weeks old and upward shall be ringed if running at large on the commons on the tenth of May next or shall be liable to be pounded according to law."

Sheep had to be "pounded according to law" also, for in spite of shepherd, fence viewer and hayward the contrary creatures strayed and had to be brought back and auctioned off at the Town sign post "by outcry and beat of drums to the highest bidder." We find this notice: "Taken damage feasant and impounded in Newtown pound, four sheep. One black sheep, marked with a crop on ye neare ear and a hole in ye off ear. Two white sheep with a crop on ye off ear and a half-penny under ye seide of ye same ear. One white sheep with a slanting crop on ye near ear and a hole in ye off ear, and I cried ye same in ye several towns as ye law directs and sold them on ye second day of January 1759, at four of ye clock, afternoon, at ye sign post in Newtown for four shillings each, sixteen shillings for all four by me, William Birch, constable of Newtown." The constable's fee for crying and selling and all his trouble, the cost of poundage and damage, the drummer's fee and other charges "exceeded the amount for which the sheep sold by seven shillings and one penny"—the Town treasury was the loser.

The sheep must have led a hazardous life. We know the territory harbored bears, "wild catts" and wolves. On these last a bounty of fifteen shillings per head was paid, and half as much for "wolve's whelp yt suck." Curiously enough

we find no mention of dogs—usually the friend and sometimes unaccountably the enemy of the flocks. Perhaps they were all well behaved in those days.

We have no record of the number of sheep in the Town before 1800, which is surprising because the numerous references in the Town Records show what an important factor in the farmer's economy was his flock, but in 1803 as many as 4,010 are listed. Beside the sheep he kept on his farm, each man at this time was allowed thirty head in the Town flock. Each year a Sheep Master was appointed and he hired a shepherd, assisted for many years by a trusty Negro named Caesar, who was employed at \$12.00 per month, "if not to be had for a lower price." The season for this common flock began in early June (after the sheep had been sheared and when the new lambs were old enough to be turned loose), and lasted until late September. The Sheep Master saw to collecting the sheep from the different school districts, planned the route or "drift" to be followed during the summer, chose the best common land for pasturage and arranged for overnight "yarding" in safely enclosed fields. Farmers were glad to pay to have the flock use their fields for these stops because the droppings were considered excellent fertilizer for grain crops, especially wheat and rye. The highest bidder won the privilege of keeping the flock for week-ends, since wherever they stopped Saturday night, they remained until Monday morning. Even for sheep the Sabbath was a day of rest. The popularity of keeping the flock overnight was so great that frequently the same farmer bid sufficiently high to secure several chances. It usually worked out that farmers paid enough to cover all flock expenses (wages of shepherd, etc.) and even to distribute a small dividend at the end of the season.

In 1823 The Newtown Sheep Company was formed. Moss K. Botsford was chosen Sheepmaster for that year. The route for collecting the flock was as follows: "from Chestnut Tree Hill through Zoar to Ebenezer Beers, thence through Toddy Hill to Caesar's (the old darky), thence through Taunton, Palestine, Land's End and Hanover to Wapping, and thence through Sandy Hook to Newtown Street." All this was expected to be accomplished in about eight days. Naturally the sheep must feed along the route and rest over Sunday, besides waiting for those additions to the flock which did not reach the pick-up spot exactly on time. When the entire flock was collected, the shepherd, and a boy hired for three or four dollars a month to help him, started on the season's tour. Picture the boy, the shepherd and surely several eager dogs, starting out with nearly a thousand sheep for the first night's stopping place, about a "ten-hour feeding drift" away. At night, with the sheep safely enclosed in the farmer's field, the shepherd and the boy were provided with their "keep" and a night's rest by the same farmer. So, all through the summer, the flock moved along their pre-arranged route until the Sheep Master ordered the disbanding in September. The final round-up was held at Caleb Baldwin's on Newtown Street (the second house south of Trinity Church). Here the owners gathered for the breaking up of the flock and to claim their own sheep. Since Baldwin's was a tavern as well as the point for the round-up, the occasion was undoubtedly one for general celebration.

The sheep business was profitable until about 1860 when the establishment of the Beecher Satinet Factory in Sandy Hook sharply cut the local demand for wool.

Now, almost a hundred years later, there is revival of sheep raising in Newtown.

NEWTOWN'S LATER CHURCHES

As has been told, two of Newtown's Churches were a part of the Town from the earliest times. The histories of Churches and Town are so interwoven that the story of no one of them can be told without bringing in the others. This, however, is not the case with other Churches and Parishes which were established later, or which flourished for a short time only.

A Sandemanian Society had a considerable influence in Town affairs for a number of years. These followers of the Scotsman, Robert Sandeman, organized here about 1740 to hold their services or "love feasts," in each other's houses. The ritual—or lack of it—must have been effective, for this emotional type of evangelism drew many members away from the more austere Congregational and Episcopal Churches. The movement seems to have burned itself out after about fifty years.

The first Baptist Church was established not in the center of Newtown nor of Sandy Hook, but at Zoar Corners. There in 1794 the Society erected a large barn-like structure, not at all suggestive of a Church. How long services were held there is not known, but tradition has it that the building was torn down and the timbers found their way into various barns in the neighborhood. In 1850 a smaller, well built and well furnished edifice was erected just next to the Zoar Cemetery, and the lovely Berkshire Pond was used for baptisms. But slowly the congregation dwindled and after several years of disuse the Church and contents were sold at auction in 1913.

Methodist meetings were held as early as 1800 in a private house just about where Trinity Church now stands. They were conducted by two instructors, Joseph Pierce and Levi Buson. For a long time the members had been ministered to by circuit preachers, the nearest Church being in Easton. By 1831 the first Meeting House was built on Main Street, just south of the Library. Soon the increasing population in Sandy Hook, due to the flourishing factories there, made the parishioners demand a Church located nearer their homes, and the present Church was built there in 1850.

In 1831 the Zoar section of Town was a populous center with many more houses than at present, and mills, small shops and factories made up a lively

community. On the hill (then quite high, before the State road reduced the grade), opposite the old Gray's Plain Schoolhouse, a new house of worship was erected. This was the Episcopal Church of St. James, an offshoot of Trinity Parish. (The novel, "Shiloh," by W. M. L. Jay, is based on life in the district of Zoar at this period, and it describes St. James Church in detail). The first Rector had resigned from Trinity after an incumbency of thirty years, but stayed with the new Parish only a very short while. Whatever caused the split, it did not last long because after ten years (and a different Rector), St. James Parish returned to the parent one. The Church building was finally torn down in the 1870's, and its cornerstone can now be seen set into the lawn of Trinity Church—"St. James Ch. 1831."

The followers of the Universalist denomination built a large Church in 1835 on Main Street, on the site of the present Town Hall. The membership appears to have lessened rapidly, because in 1858 the building was sold to St. Rose Parish and used for the Roman Catholic Church. In 1883 it changed hands again, when it was bought for the Town Hall, and served that purpose until the Edmond Town Hall was erected in 1929.

Tradition holds that the first Mass to be celebrated in Newtown was in June, 1781, offered by Abbé Robin, Chaplain of Rochambeau's troops. But it may be that some kindly missionary priest had conducted services here for the forlorn French refugees from Acadia nearly a quarter of a century earlier.

The frightful potato famine in Ireland in 1840 seems remote from Newtown, but actually it had a direct bearing on the development of the Town. Following that terrible event, over a million and a half people sought a new homeland in America. It was just then that industrial expansion was occurring in Sandy Hook, and in time a large influx of Irish workers came there, ready to settle down in the new village and become a part of it. We have told how the School Districts expanded to accommodate the new citizens, but long before that, naturally, they sought the consolation of their religion.

There are two traditions as to the first service held for the Roman Catholics of Newtown. The first is that Mass was celebrated in 1841 by the Reverend James Smythe, one of the pioneers of the Diocese. The second puts the date six years later. As we have no record of Catholics living in the town before 1845, it seems as if the latter date were correct. According to this understanding. Mass was celebrated in 1847 by the Rev. John Brady from Hartford at the home of Peter Leavy. This is the small white house still standing near the railroad tracks. There were twelve persons present at the Mass. Since the tax list of that year contains the names of three Irish families, they could easily have made up the twelve present.

By 1858 the number of Roman Catholics had increased rapidly, and when the Reverend John Smith of Danbury purchased the Universalist Meeting House for a Church, the congregation had grown to one hundred members. Up to this time the Newtown Catholics had been under the jurisdiction of St. Peter's Church in Danbury, from where a priest would come at intervals to

celebrate Mass and administer the Sacraments. Many of the pioneer Catholics used to tell about walking to Danbury for Mass when the priest could not come to Newtown.

In 1859 the first resident pastor, Dr. Francis Lenihan, organized the present Parish under the patronage of St. Rose of Lima. He also purchased land for the cemetery, but it was not blessed until 1862. There is a stone there erected to the memory of Mary Cain (Keane) dated Sept. 7, 1860, that is marked as the first burial in the cemetery.

At one time in the 1860's, New Milford was a mission under St. Rose, attended by the priests from Newtown, and other Parishes which they served were Oxford, Brookfield and Southbury.

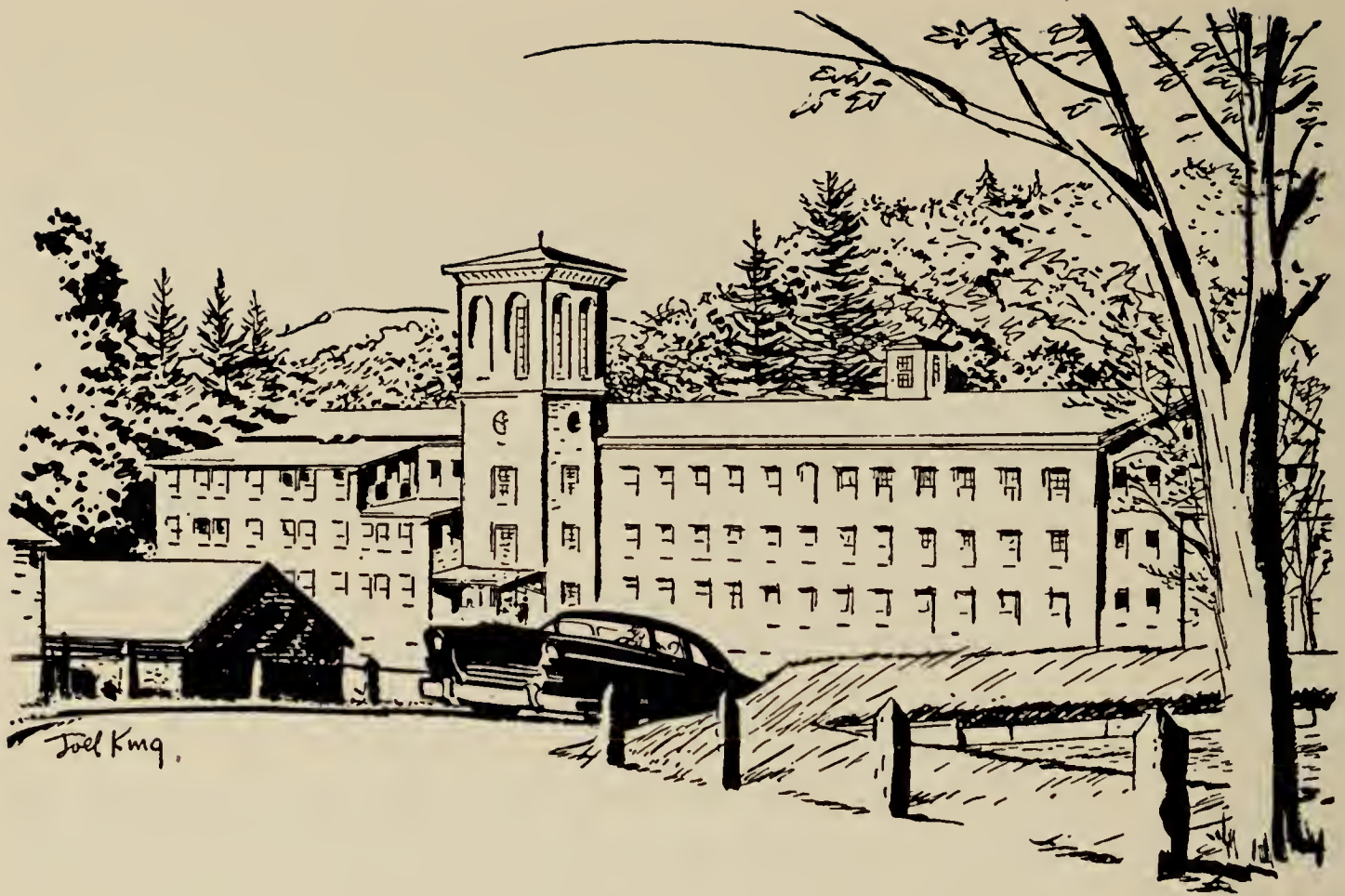
It was Father James McCartan who came here in 1873 and who was the builder of the present St. Rose Church edifice. In order to accommodate the large portion of his congregation which lived in Sandy Hook and the adjacent districts, the location of the new Church was transferred from Newtown Street to its present site. It was completed in 1883. Father McCartan also built St. Patrick's Hall in the rear of the Church, and the Convent, which was the original rectory. Dearly loved by his parishioners, upon his death he was buried in front of the Church he had erected.

St. Stephen's Church in Stepney was a mission of St. Rose until 1934, and the Parochial School in Sandy Hook was built by the priest, Father Fox, in 1896. The old rectory there was turned into a Convent for the Sisters of Mercy who taught in the school. The school prospered until the removal of the New York Belting and Packing Company from Sandy Hook in 1900, when so many families left town with the factory that the school was finally closed. The building was sold to the town in 1928 and is the present Sandy Hook Public School.

St. John's in Sandy Hook is another offspring of Trinity Parish. The first building was erected in 1868 under conditions of a bequest of William B. Glover. It was then a Diocesan Mission. The Parish of St. John's was organized in 1880, and the Guild, which came into being at the same time, has always been an important factor in the support of the Church. Unhappily in 1929 the original structure was burned to the ground, but five years later a new building was completed and the present Church was consecrated in 1934.

The youngest Church in Newtown's proud list of the 19th century seems to have died in infancy. We know that a Union Chapel was erected in Taunton District in 1878, but beyond that fact the Records are silent.

It is to be regretted that such a brief outline as this cannot go into the significance of the spiritual inspiration given to our Town by our Churches, but it is written in the hearts of the members and needs no other accounting.



MILESTONES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

When the 19th century appeared over the horizon it found Newtown again violently in opposition with the neighboring towns, this time over a startling new project: the organization of a Turnpike Corporation which proposed to construct and maintain a toll road right through Newtown, from New Milford to the city line of Bridgeport. The agitation had been going on for two years and the other towns along the route favored it enthusiastically as a means of getting their farm produce and manufactured goods to the city markets. But Newtown, with her customary conservatism, was opposed. Perhaps a stock-selling enterprise seemed suspicious. The Town protested to the General Assembly in 1800 against the granting of a charter and objected to having "our road obstructed by turnpikes and gates," although offering to repair and improve the nine miles of road going through Newtown, arranging to pay 75¢ per man per day to do so.

As happens too often today, the Assembly did not act upon the Bill the year it was presented. By the time it was due to come up for consideration at the next Session a change of feeling had come over Newtown's 2,903 inhabitants, and it was voted not to remonstrate after all. So the Assembly granted a charter to the Bridgeport and Newtown Turnpike Corporation and permitted the erection of three toll gates; the north one on the Brookfield line, the Middle gate on Newtown's south boundary, and a third four miles north of the city limits of Bridgeport. No tolls were charged for those going to Church, to funerals or to the grist mills, but 4-wheeled pleasure carriages with driver

and passenger paid 25¢, a rider on horseback, 4¢, sleighs with two horses and driver, 8¢ (seems well worth the price!), stage coaches, 25¢, horses, mules and neat cattle, one cent each. In 1839 the rates were raised on pleasure carriages "hung on springs of steel, leather or iron"—(one always has to pay to be comfortable).

In spite of her misgivings about the Turnpike, Newtown profited greatly by it. The Town became the midway stopping point for man and beast. The round trip for ox-drawn carts loaded with produce or other goods took three days for the haul from New Milford to Bridgeport, and Newtown caught them coming and going. The inns and taverns reaped a harvest from the traffic, and especially from the stage coaches which rattled into town with hooves clattering and the drivers' horns blaring the announcement of arrival. By 1829 the stages were running on regular routes and almost regular schedules. Horses were changed in Newtown and the passengers piled out for food or lodging before starting off again on their trips to Hartford, Bridgeport and Norwalk, or up to Litchfield, over to "Sing Sing," or down to New York.

Two Inns on Main Street were established in 1790. Caleb Baldwin's, where the town flock was rounded up in the fall, was always popular with drovers of cattle and horses. The place was restful and conservative and famous for good food. Among the many positions of civic trust held by Baldwin was that of Newtown's first Postmaster, appointed in 1800. He held that assignment for twenty years. The post riders and later the mail coaches made delivery to his Inn where the Post Office was located—a collection of pigeon holes above a broad, high desk. The mail usually got through about once a week.

It might be mentioned here that this pleasant tavern was not Newtown's earliest. That claim to fame is credited to Peter Hubbell, who in 1711 was "voted liberty to keep a house of entertainment for the year ensuing." This would seem to bring a note of cheer to the serious matters considered at the early Town Meetings, because we know that many of them were held at Town Clerk Hubbell's house. Probably violent disagreements and flaring tempers were mellowed by a jug of hot grog from Peter's friendly hearth.

Czar Keeler started the second Inn on Main Street in 1790, not far to the north of Baldwin's. This was a big house with a long slanting roof and an enormous fireplace, around which gathered the townsmen to exchange news of village affairs. On the second floor was a large room used for balls and other social gatherings. When in 1820 Keeler followed Baldwin as Postmaster, the big desk with the pigeon holes above moved up the street and the Post Office was re-installed. Keeler's Tavern was also a "stage house" and was very popular with travellers.

A later Inn was Dr. Gideon Shepherd's in the house that stands on the corner of Church Street and the Boulevard. It was a rendezvous for sleighing parties and other local gaieties. The sign swaying from the post in front read "A plain Tavern for plain folks, kept by a plain man" and on the reverse

was the suggestion "if not suited, the road opens both ways." Since this Inn was on the stage route to Hartford it was well patronized. Continuing down the hill, on the same stage route and also near that from New Haven to Hartford, was the Sandy Hook Hotel, for a long time under the management of B. Gregory, and still in operation today.

About 1820 Sallu Pell Barnum, a genial landlord, started another roadside tavern in a house on the site of the Library. Later this was acquired by W. H. Dick, and in the 1880's was flourishing as Dick's Hotel. It burned down in 1897 and the "Newtown Inn" was erected on its site and became a very popular hotel for summer boarders. Also doing a thriving business in the 1880's was Brown's Hotel, with George H. Brown proprietor and F. M. Chapman manager. This establishment was known later as the Grand Central Hotel, then as the Parker House and now as the Yankee Drover Inn. One more on the Turnpike was the Middlebrook, almost on the Monroe line and not much of a factor in Town life, but popular with travellers coming by the late stage from Bridgeport.

The old roadside Inns were picturesque and cheerful, and must have been greatly missed when changing conditions brought about their decline.

The building of the Housatonic Railroad (about which more, later), caused business to fall off rapidly. In 1848 the north tollgate was abandoned, and by the late '80's the Bridgeport and Newtown Turnpike Corporation had faded into history.

In all our country villages, fire is an ever present menace, but Newtown waited until 1803 before making any concerted effort for control. At that time the townspeople voted \$100 toward purchasing a fire engine, but two months later rescinded the vote and appointed Elijah Nichols "chimney viewer" instead. The arrangement proved inadequate because in 1807 a serious conflagration on Main Street threatened to wipe out many dwellings there. Whereupon an enterprising group led by the Honorable William Edmond, by private subscription raised \$450 toward the purchase of a fire engine, but it was learned with dismay that the cost of "a good and effectual engine with a house to shelter it" would be in the neighborhood of \$700. The group then presented a petition to the Selectmen asking for money to provide an adequate sum. The petition stated "that seriously alarmed at a recent event which threatened for a time to lay their dwellings in ashes, to unhouse their families and produce a scene of destruction and distress awful to contemplate and too painful to describe," the citizens "met to take into consideration their exposed and dangerous situation." Their unanimous opinion was that the householders were in duty bound to see that "their chimneys were swept or cleaned by burning, and that they should provide themselves with ladders as expeditiously as possible." A fire engine was considered to be "the best instrument properly served with which to contend against so unruly and dangerous an element and indeed the only one in which any just confidence of success might be placed in the hour of danger."

A Town Meeting was called to consider the petition, and \$200 from the Treasury was voted to augment the \$450 already in hand for the purpose, "provided that nothing should subject the Town hereafter to the payment of any other or further sum, either for the engine, a house to shelter it, or for cisterns, ladders, fire hooks, ropes, buckets, working the engine or any expense whatever respecting the same, but the Town shall be exempted therefrom in the same manner as though this vote had not been passed."

The Town seems to have taken no further action in this connection except to appoint annually a chimney viewer, a post held for years by the same Elijah Nichols. However, benefits for the Fire Company became regular social events and then, as now, were supported by the grateful townspeople.

The War of 1812 seems to have made almost no impression on the daily life of the Town, and the Records concerning it are meager in the extreme.

That the indecisive conflict was unpopular is well known: in fact, the State of Connecticut at one time considered secession from the Union because of it. According to Johnson's History only twelve men appear to have enlisted from Newtown. They served apparently in New London and New Haven, and happily there is no report that any lost their lives.

Newtown's next political step was to accept and ratify the "Constitution of civil government of the people of this State" in 1818. This is the same Constitution under which the State is functioning today.

1824 saw the establishment of the Borough of Newtown, the second oldest in the State. It is fully described in the present-day section of this book.

Years rolled by, and steady growth and the blessings of peace marked the life of the Town. The need for markets, however, was always being considered. At one time (1822) the proposition was made to construct a canal alongside the Housatonic from Long Island Sound to the Massachusetts line. Newtown favored the project (provided the Town was put to no expense), and even went so far as to present it to the General Assembly. Many were disappointed when the undertaking fell through. At about this time Barber's History refers to "the flourishing village of Sandy Hook" with the "fine mill stream (the Pohtatuck) running northerly at the foot of an almost perpendicular bluff 160ft. high." The Sandy Hook factories could have made good use of a canal running down to the sea. The financial crash of 1837 had an adverse effect upon these factories and on some of the local home industries, but fortunately not for long. The businesses as a whole were built on sound financial structures and valiantly weathered the storm. An astonishingly varied list of products were being made in Sandy Hook, Zoar and nearby centers and to a smaller extent in Newtown at this time. There were innumerable small plants manufacturing horn combs and buttons, importing "horns and hooves from Buenos Aires," as well as metal-casting shops for brass keys, reinforced pewter spoons, parts for shotguns and rifles, and in the woodwork-

ing trades, furniture, wooden screws, sleighs, carriages and coffins all were turned out to meet the demands of the expanding nation. The New York Belting and Packing Company, "the largest institution of its kind in the world," made a tremendous impact on the Town's economy as has already been suggested. Newtown's connection with the rubber industry began nearly 125 years ago. Charles Goodyear was born in New Haven and his sister married a Sandy Hook resident. Young Goodyear spent many hours experimenting with rubber in his brother-in-law's factory in the Glen. He had discovered the process of the vulcanization of rubber in 1839, and the commercial possibilities of the new material were quickly realized by enterprising manufacturers. Goodyear himself never became wealthy from his inventions, but he benefited his fellowmen and to this day the rubber industry is active in Sandy Hook.

It is not surprising to learn that by 1835 Newtown and all the Housatonic Valley towns realized that transportation facilities must be developed in order to reach markets. The more venturesome souls advocated construction of that modern miracle, a railroad, to connect Bridgeport with the distant trade center Albany, and from there to the limitless West. Shares were sold, money flowed in and the start was actually made three years later, commencing at Bridgeport. All work was done by hand or with one-horse dumpcarts. When the crews reached this section and made the tunnel at Hawleyville it was the wonder of the countryside. Under the circumstances, the road seems to have been constructed very quickly. It was the first railroad in the State, and the first passenger train made the trip from New Milford to Bridgeport on February 14, 1840. Needless to say, dire predictions followed its breathless passage, but the children ran out of the schoolhouses to cheer, housewives waved their aprons, the dogs barked themselves into hysterics, horses, cows and sheep fled in terror and pleasurable excitement was provided for all. The trains made stops in Botsford, Newtown, North Newtown, Hanover Springs and Hawleyville. The first person in Town to buy stock in the Housatonic Railroad was Daniel Botsford, a wealthy man who at one time owned more acres of land than any one else in Newtown. His son Jabez was the Station Agent here for years.

The railroad rapidly brought into being that strange species known as commuters, and men began to conduct their business in places other than their home town. By 1853 stagecoaches made connections at Newtown station for towns not served by the railroad and the traffic rapidly increased.

Not everyone felt kindly toward this noisy monster pouring out wood smoke in the green valleys. Some towns did not permit trains to run on Sunday and others restricted their passage until after the hours of Church services. We read in the July, 1853 issue of the "Academician" (published by the enterprising pupils of the Newtown Academy) an indignant report of an accident to the Reverend Mr. O. H. Smith of Redding Ridge, when his horse was scared by the train and tipped over the carriage: "the engineer, although he

saw the whole occurrence, passed on without stopping to render any assistance. Are such men fit to be engineers?"

By 1881 Hawleyville is described as "a great railroad center." "The Housatonic Road from Bridgeport to Pittsfield and on to the State line, the New York and New England Road from Brewster's Station on the Harlem Road to everywhere down east, the Shepaug Road from Danbury, its hats and its Danbury-News-Man, to Litchfield, cross each other here." A train trip of the day has us "pass through the little stations and quiet hamlets of Stepney and Botsford, and press on till we reach the pleasant region of Newtown, so pleasant indeed, that during the summer months its homes are well filled, its roadways thronged and its broad acres rambled over by numberless guests from the cities, who get good air, good living, rest and recreation, health and strength at very reasonable rates, as far as dollars and cents are concerned."

The Newtowners of those days would find it hard to believe that seventy-five years later there would be no passenger trains, only three freight stops and many abandoned lines in the territory which they knew as a center of railroad activity. Today's mammoth trucks and fast cars were of course undreamed of.

Although general prosperity brought material gains, it must not be thought that the Town lost its grip on moral matters. The temperance movement was in full swing at about this time, although efforts to control drinking had been under way for a long while. People ate and drank lustily in the 1850's. Slimness of figure was considered a misfortune, sports as we know them were indulged in hardly at all and liquor was plentiful and cheap. It is something of an eye-opener to find that at a meeting in Fairfield of Church officials from neighboring towns, it was voted "wholly to discontinue the use of ardent spirits at all future meetings of this body, except in cases of real necessity."

In 1854 the State Legislature took action to suppress intemperance and made a grant of money to Newtown's Selectmen to aid them in carrying on the good work in this locality. The stories of the Temperance Rallies of those days are too familiar to need repeating; the white badge, "taking the pledge," slogans like "lips that touch liquor shall never touch mine," and so on, are part of American folklore. But one cannot resist presenting two verses from "The Temperance Songster" of the day.

"RUM, CURST RUM"

(To the tune of "Home, Sweet Home")

'Mid charnel and pest houses though we may roam
Be it ever so frightful, there's no plague like Rum!
A charm from below seems to lead to the snare

And leaves us in darkness and gloom and despair.

Rum, Rum, curst, curst Rum!

There's no plague like Rum,

There's no plague like Rum.

“PRAISE OF WATER”

(To the tune of “America”)

Yon silver fountain's basin

'Tis sweet to see thy face in,

Fair harvest moon!

And, when the sun has shone in,

On the white pebbles thrown in,

'Tis sweet to see our own in,

At sultry noon.

Somehow one might wonder if such verses would not drive a sinner *to* drink, rather than away from it.

A most important step toward progress was made in 1855 when the Newtown Savings Bank was organized under the leadership of Henry Beers Glover. Not many American business institutions can boast of so substantial and helpful a career as that of this local Bank which celebrated its 100th anniversary in June of this year. It is unnecessary for this scanty account to re-tell the story for it has been so ably set forth in the anniversary booklet issued by the Bank itself, but no account of Newtown would be complete without a tribute to an institution which for a century has been of such vital importance in the development of the Town.

The years rolled by, and although the Town was prosperous and expanding along the normal lines of progress, behind the sunny skies rumbled the thunder of critical divisions in political philosophy: should the Nation be “half slave and half free?” President Lincoln was admired but not altogether understood by the New England states. After all, he was an uncouth, log-cabin frontiersman, and how could the followers of Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Thoreau and Alcott completely trust so outlandish a leader? Newtown struggled with the same problems that rent the rest of the Nation, and in addition, as a frightful climax, came the scourge of smallpox. As has already been told, this was not the community's first encounter with the plague, but it was almost a hundred years ago that the dread disease had afflicted the village. Now the danger was greater because there were more people, living in closer contact with one another.

It seems that the outbreak can be traced to a settlement of five or six families living in the Hattertown district. Their farms were located along a

Town road, now nothing but a vague trail, which ran from the junction of the Hattertown and Mt. Nebo roads and made a short cut to Redding. One of their members brought the disease back from New York, and the entire community subsequently was wiped out by it. The horrible contagion spread, and in 1859 the Selectmen approved the building of a pest house in the contaminated area because Dr. Bronson recommended isolation. Great crises bring forth great leaders, and this time it was a Negro named Purdy who had had small-pox, and he volunteered to take care of the afflicted. Tradition holds that he was operating a station on the "underground" and was smuggling runaway slaves into Canada. With another heroic volunteer, name unknown, Purdy ministered to the sick and dying. Coffins were made by one of the Parmalees who had a hearse to carry them (the "hearse house" is still standing on Hattertown road, though now transformed into a modern garage). Parmalee would bring the coffins as far as he dared toward Mt. Nebo road, where the devoted Purdy would pick them up and probably himself dig the graves in the cemetery on the Redding border. Although this section of Newtown is known locally as Purdy Station and a street sign so designated is placed at the start of the abandoned road, it would seem that the Town might have bestowed some greater official recognition upon one who so nobly embodied the highest ideal of Christianity.

The dreadful Civil War took its toll of Newtown men, as it did everywhere else. Twelve days after Ft. Sumter was fired upon, three local men volunteered, two of them to die and the third to suffer all his life from wounds. The Town had its difficulties in the years following to fill its quotas, voting bounties of two and three hundred dollars to those joining the Army. By 1863 it was necessary to form a committee to procure volunteers, and the next year the Town was authorized to borrow \$25,000 to defray the cost of supplying the quota under the last call of the President. The records of the Adjutant General's office show that 243 Newtown men enlisted in the tragic struggle. Their names are recorded on the Soldiers and Sailors Monument at the head of Newtown's Main Street: but what does a mere list of names tell of the agony and heartbreak of war?

The human animal has great powers of recuperation, and so has a Town made up of such specimens. Newtown adjusted itself to economic and social conditions after the War between the States, and took the momentous changes in its stride. Naturally during the War, local affairs had had to be put aside, but by 1870 the condition of the roads throughout the Town was a subject for bitter complaint. The highway from Sandy Hook to Newtown was an especially unsatisfactory one, the steep grade on Church hill, as it rose to Newtown Street, being the straw that used to break the camel's back. Our forebears held many Town Meetings and spent endless hours considering the problems of the roads: which is just what we find ourselves doing today. Bog-

gy roads used to be particularly trying, and one of the methods used to improve them was “blotting”—dumping cartloads of sawdust on the wet stretches. As far back as 1885 we read of agitation to build a sidewalk from Sandy Hook to Newtown, to cost not more than \$2,000. We still do not have the much-needed sidewalk, but perhaps seventy years is not time enough for the Town to act upon a proposition.

Along with the humming of factories, the agricultural interests of Newtown were not neglected. Improvements in farm machinery lessened the labor and expanded the scope of the farmers, and the increase in population provided a local outlet for their produce. Around the latter half of the century several Newtown farmers were successful in raising turkeys and found Bridgeport to be their most satisfactory market. The method of delivering the birds in those automobile- and truck-less days was for the farmer to start out in the morning on horseback, driving his “gobble”-ing flock ahead of him on the peaceful highroad. When evening came the birds, knowing their own business, would fly up and roost in the bordering trees. Whereupon the farmer rode back home and spent a comfortable night in his own bed. Early the next morning he would return to his roosting flock and perhaps hurry their descent with a scattering of tempting grain. Then the drive would be resumed and the city dealers reached before another nightfall. Have we mentioned that times have changed?

Social life in those days was gay and lively, although of course much more limited to local affairs than now. In winter the young farmers had more time for fun than in summer, when their lands demanded labor from morning to night. Skating parties on the Foundry Pond (the ice pond) and races in fast, graceful sleighs were very popular. A famous sledding party was once held when, with snow conditions exactly right, a group of young men actually coasted on the road from the top of Mt. Pleasant hill down to Pohtatuck brook!

Taunton pond was always a fisherman’s favorite. Steps to regulate the sport there were taken in 1858, and in 1870 the pond was stocked with black bass and no fishing was permitted for the next three years. Trout abounded in the local brooks, rushing in those days through almost uninhabited woods and meadows. Quail and pheasant, rabbits, deer, foxes, opossums, raccoons and an occasional wildcat provided sport for the hunter. A fox hunt of great renown was held in 1875 and seems to have been a notable event.

Many of the social affairs were undertaken with a civic objective—like raising funds for the John Beach Memorial Library in 1877. Performances of the Dramatic Club helped to build sidewalks, and other events raised money for the Volunteer Fire Company.

In 1882 there were two Brass Bands in town which were called upon frequently, especially at the Fourth of July celebrations. These were elaborate all-day affairs in those days, with no restrictions on the use of fireworks to lessen the excitement.

The Nation was very patriotism-conscious in the centennial year of 1876, and on that Fourth of July Newtown's first "Liberty Pole", as they called it, was erected. Forty-three citizens had raised \$107.50 to purchase the pole and the flag. (Our present steel one, set up in 1950, cost \$2,900.00). The first flagpole was succeeded by a second and a third, always in the same location. For years it used to be painted by one Bert Nichols who would shinny up the pole without benefit of safety ropes, an event which always drew an admiring audience.

The year 1877 was one of great significance for Newtown although at the time few supposed that the newspaper started then by John T. Pearse of Bethel would become such an important element in the life of the Town. With the financial backing of A. A. Bensel, The Newtown Bee started buzzing in a loft over a plumbing shop located just north of the Congregational Church. Although the editor, Pearse, was credited with having "a nose for news," he was an eccentric character and so undependable that sometimes The Bee missed an issue altogether. By 1880, failure seemed inevitable, especially since a rival newspaper, The Chronicle, published by a man named Madigan, was flourishing in the same field. But at this point Reuben Henry Smith, a newspaper man with experience in Waterbury and Springfield, ventured to buy the ailing Bee. With every sort of technical difficulty to contend with, he brought out his first issue in April, 1881. The story is told that Smith called in all the members of his family and they sat around the dining table of the hospitable Ezra Levan Johnson and wrapped the copies of that first issue. By dint of hard work and perseverance the antiquated equipment was replaced and The Bee made its regular weekly flights over an ever-expanding territory. Reuben Smith was indefatigable. Known for miles around as "The Bee Man," he drove in his buggy through the wide area covered by his paper. He established correspondents in the surrounding communities and everywhere made friends and new subscribers, almost all of whom he knew by name. As the Town grew, so did The Bee. Before long the rival Chronicle was bought out, larger quarters were needed, and the paper moved into the Post Office building on Main Street which had formerly housed the Newtown Academy. This was about 1882.

Ten years later, two brothers of Reuben Smith bought the business from him because illness in his family forced the editor's retirement, and he moved to California to live. Allison P. Smith and Arthur J. Smith thereupon entered into a partnership as editor and business manager respectively, which lasted for forty-two years and was noted for its harmony, as well as for its success in the publishing field. The two brothers conducted the same sort of personal-

type newspaper as had their predecessor, and drove about the countryside for a radius of thirty miles, gathering news items and advertisements. "A. P." and "A. J." as they were known, were widely loved and respected. Again The Bee outgrew its quarters, and in 1903 settled in a new hive on Church Hill, the site of its present-day establishment which was enlarged in 1950. Today's editor, Paul S. Smith, is the son of "A. J." He joined the staff of The Bee in 1932 as assistant to his father in the business management and in 1934 became editor upon the death of his uncle. Arthur J. Smith died ten years later and the son and nephew of the famous brothers carries on their policies and ideals today. The loyalty of the staff and their long terms of service, as well as those of the out of town correspondents have always been notable, and are a genuine tribute to The Bee Publishing Company.

The rooster weathervane on the Congregational Church and the towering flagpole at the center crossroads have been for a very long time famous landmarks of Newtown, and fortunately are still with us. Another landmark of a different character appeared upon the scene in 1888, but now no trace of it remains: only its name, by which a prominent hill and a Town road are called. This was the fabulous "Castle Ronald" on Castle Hill.

It seems that Peter Lorillard Ronald of New York, inheritor of tobacco millions and described as an "extremely wealthy and somewhat erratic gentleman," happened upon the site one day and announced that it was the finest he had ever seen. This was high praise for the Connecticut countryside, because Ronald was a world-traveler. Sportsman, bon-vivant, gambler and friend of royalty, he was a flamboyant exponent of a flamboyant era. He was especially devoted to horses, preferring coaching to racing. He had driven a coach with four dappled grays on a tour through Europe—to great appreciation and acclaim—and was considered a famous "Whip" there as well as in this country, where he was known as "the Father of Coaching." Sometimes he drove a wagonette which had belonged to the Duke of Wellington, accompanied by "Nero," his pet Russian poodle. Once in Newport, after having roused everyone's interest to fever pitch by tales of his new Tally-Ho, he and his friend Leonard Jerome dashed into the fashionable resort behind six cavorting donkeys—just for the fun of it.

This was the colorful character who descended upon Newtown, bought fifty-three acres for \$4,000 on the commanding hilltop, and proceeded to erect a structure described as "more of a castle than a house" with the comment that there was "no building like it in the United States"—nor in the world, one might conjecture. Characteristically scorning the services of architects, Ronald drew up his own plans. The edifice was to be an enduring monument to his 1,000-year Scottish ancestry, and a repository for his collections of armor, paintings and curios from all over the world. Quiet, conservative Newtown was breathless with excitement as the structure began to rise. More than 2,000 tons of granite and cut stone were dragged up the steep slope by ox-cart. An army of masons and carpenters was employed. When the wind blew

down the well-drilling rig, Ronald sheltered the crew in a tent, once the property of the Prince of Wales.

The walls of the Castle were solid stone two feet thick. The front was 110 feet long, and ran east and west, flanked by two 108 foot wings running north and south. There were three arched hallways thirteen feet high in the center section, the middle corridor opening at the ends and making a driveway right through the house. The spaces on the sides held a fifty-three-foot cistern, servants quarters, wine rooms, furnace space, gymnasium, swimming pool, bowling alley and billiard room. Upstairs were drawing rooms, banquet halls and sleeping quarters. The bathrooms had trapdoors in the floors, under which were sunken pools equipped for baths of rainwater, of the Turkish, or of the Russian variety. They were filled by the pumping of a windmill whose flashing blades could be seen for miles around. Across the top of the building, between the two wings which were covered with iron shingles, a conservatory with a glass roof was built which housed orange and fig trees, and provided strawberries all year. On top of this was a twelve-foot-square observatory, sixty feet above the ground, from which the waters of the Sound could be clearly seen. There were no trees to obstruct the view, but later Ronald planted those now flourishing on the rim of the hill in the outline of a ship's prow because he liked ships. A system of speaking-tubes provided communication throughout the vast structure, and bells reached the outlying buildings. Stables, icehouse, cowbarns, carriage houses, farmers' houses, tennis court, driveways, gardens—all were part of the plan.

In 1889 Ronald left to spend the winter in Europe, and late that fall a fire broke out in the heating system of the conservatory and the Castle was very nearly gutted. Consternation was felt throughout the countryside, and the town voted to rebate all taxes on the property for seven years as inducement to Ronald to rebuild. Although many irreplaceable valuables had been lost, to say nothing of other costs, once again the sound of building was heard on the hill, and numbers of local artisans were employed to repair the damage.

Finally, at long last, Castle Ronald was complete, its flag flew from the 75-foot pole, and again the coach-and-four became a familiar sight around Town. But then, alas, Newtown learned a sad truth: the incredible Castle, the object of everyone's curiosity, was occupied, not by Mrs. Peter Lorillard Ronald, but by Miss Elizabeth Blake. True, Miss Blake, petite, pretty and red-haired, was always chaperoned by an aunt and was always referred to as Mr. Ronald's secretary:—but this was not acceptable to Mrs. Grundy, nor to the ladies of Newtown. Nor, evidently, to Mrs. Ronald, for never, as far as is known, did she set foot in the Castle. She was born Miss Mary Frances Carter of Boston and was one of the few American women welcomed at the British Court by Queen Victoria. As is well known, the Queen made it a rule to receive no divorced women, so it has been presumed that Mrs. Ronald considered the prestige of the royal entrée to be worth remaining the wife—even if only in name—of the philandering Peter Lorillard. Suddenly in 1905 Ronald died, and left the Castle to Miss Blake. Without sufficient funds for its sup-

port, Miss Blake tried to conduct a sanitarium, but the attempt was unsuccessful and before long the property was lost by foreclosure. A dreary period followed. Attempts to establish schools and other ventures met with failure, and finally for many years the Castle stood abandoned, desolate and seemingly haunted. Still it remained a picturesque landmark as its massive bulk dominated the village from its commanding height, and many Newtowners regretted its demolition in 1947.

Early in the 1890's the Pohtatuck Grange used to organize yearly agricultural fairs which were so successful that they led to the formation of a corporation known as the Newtown Agricultural Association. This body sold shares and bought acreage approximately where the Hawley School and Taylor Field are now, enclosed the entire property with a seven-foot board fence (a challenge to small boys!), erected a covered grandstand and other buildings, and laid a half-mile race track. Here the Agricultural Fairs and other public celebrations were held. P. L. Ronald used to contribute \$100 annually and his arrival in the famous Tally-Ho was always a spectacular incident. The competition for the prizes in the different classes was keen and of great importance to the local farmers. The horse races were especially lively and altogether the Fairs were extremely popular for many years.

The close of the 19th century brought the Spanish-American war, a conflict finished almost as soon as it was begun. Only two Newtown men enlisted (according to Johnson's History), and one of them died of typhoid fever.

For a small community, Newtown can boast of a number of distinguished citizens who served their fellow men during the 19th century. She gave three Governors to the State of Connecticut, the first being Isaac Tousey who held that position in 1846. He also served as Congressman for four years and in the Connecticut Senate for six, and under President Buchanan he held the post of Secretary of the Navy. A Supreme Court membership was offered to him, but he declined. He died in Hartford in 1869.

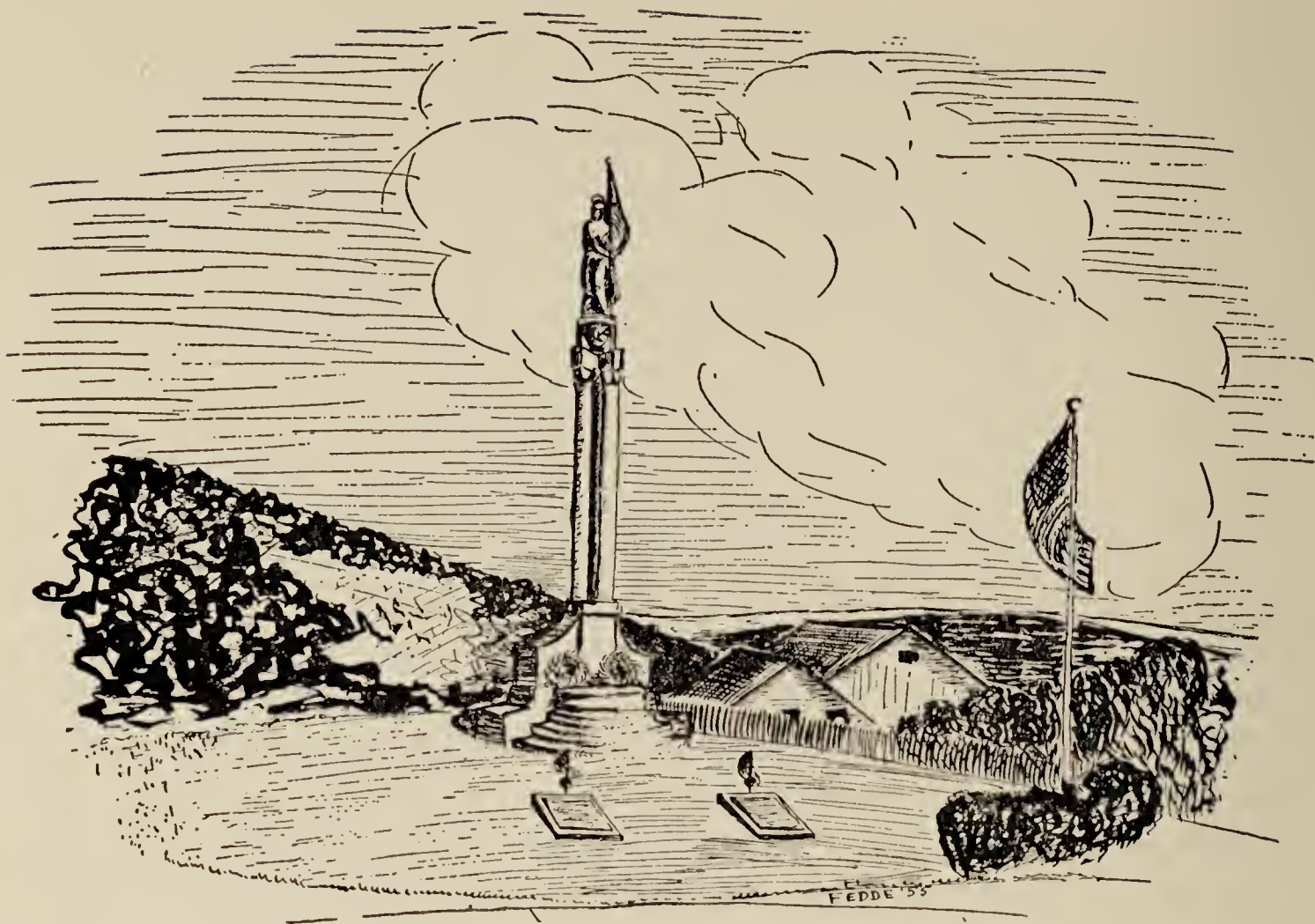
Henry Dutton was not born in Newtown, but lived and practised law here. He was Speaker of the House of Representatives in the General Assembly, later State Senator, and Governor in 1854. Afterward he became Law Professor at Yale and died in 1869.

Luzon B. Morris was born in Newtown in 1827 and in 1880 was one of the Committee appointed to settle the disputed boundary line between New York and Connecticut. Perhaps his efforts helped our State to obtain the extended section of waterfront on her extreme southwestern border. In 1893 Morris was elected Governor.

Reuben Booth was born in Newtown in 1794 and was Lieutenant-Governor in 1844-1845.

A noted personality of the town was Ezra Levan Johnson, born here in 1832. He was a well-loved teacher all his life, serving on the local Board of School Visitors for the astonishing period of fifty-eight years. His painstaking search into Newtown's history brought forth articles which appeared from time to time in *The Bee*. After his death in 1914 his wife, the former Jane Eliza Camp, collected these and other writings of his and compiled that great fund of source material, "Newtown's History and Historian," without which no outline of our historical background could be written.

Another prominent son of Newtown was Dr. Charles H. Peck, who was born here in 1870. He was graduated at the head of his class at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1892. When the United States entered World War I, Dr. Peck was commissioned Director of Base Hospital 15 (the Mackay Unit of the Roosevelt Hospital in New York) and sailed for France early in June, 1917. The magnificent service of this Unit is a matter of record and Dr. Peck was promoted to the rank of Lieut. Colonel. His son, Charles H. Peck, Jr., lost his life in France. The local post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars bears the names of father and son.



OUR TOWN BENEFACTRESS

In closing this review it seems appropriate to add to the list of distinguished citizens the name of Miss Mary Elizabeth Hawley, to whom Newtown will be forever indebted because of her munificent generosity to the Town of her birth. She was of the 9th generation in descent from Joseph Hawley, a buyer of land in Stratford in 1650. Her father, Marcus Clinton Hawley, was an astute business man who sensed the needs of the expanding nation and made a fortune in hardware and agricultural implements. He foresaw the development of the West and invested extensively in railroads, steamship lines and water works, and as each new territory was opened up his business interests increased until they were national in scope. Born in Bridgeport in 1834, he married Sarah Booth of Newtown and settled in the Booth family home (now the Hawley Manor Inn). He used to commute daily to his offices in Bridgeport or New York driving to Newtown Station in a two-wheeled gig with a pair of dalmations running under it.

Mary Elizabeth was the first child, born in 1857. Two little boys followed who died in early childhood, and another son, William E., who lived to be sixteen. It is believed that this son had some connection with Yale University: perhaps it was intended that he should become a student there—which may account for his sister's interest in the College and her bequest to it many years later.

Mary ("Mame" to her family) appears to have grown up along strictly conventional lines in a period of great conservatism. She was never goodlook-

ing, having inherited her father's huge frame, short neck and rather heavy features, and she seems to have taken no notable part in the activities of the young people in Town, except to attend Church regularly, dressed in the elaborate tight satins of the day.

Into this circumscribed existence in 1884 there came the Rev. Mr. John Addison Crockett who was called temporarily to fill the place of the Rev. Mr. G. M. Wilkins of Trinity Church. Mr. Crockett is remembered as a man of cheerful and friendly disposition, beloved by children and an enthusiastic organizer of cultural projects. He was greatly interested in the Beach Memorial Library and sponsored a reading circle connected with it, and also brought together a group which loved to sing, besides encouraging the various activities within his Church. That he was popular and sought after goes without saying. In the spring of 1885 John Addison Crockett and Mary Elizabeth Hawley were married, and left at once for a honeymoon in Europe.

It is at this point that mystery, never to be penetrated, descends upon these two lives. Marcus Hawley and his wife sailed to Europe shortly after the wedding and brought back their daughter, alone. She seems thereafter to have entered into an existence of retirement which could have been the subject of a Charlotte Brontë novel. At some period the marriage was dissolved and Mary resumed her maiden name.

The Rev. Mr. Crockett never held a Church position again, but undertook to teach classes in English in the Ingleside School for Girls in New Milford. He is described by a former pupil as "the saddest man I ever saw." What became of him after the school closed is hard to establish, but he is believed to have died, friendless and in want, in a public sanitarium.

Marcus Hawley and his wife kept their daughter almost like a prisoner. She took no part in the life of the Town and seems to have had no friends at this period. Later she became fond of two German sisters whose father had worked in some skilled capacity in Sandy Hook, but who, at the time of World War I had returned to Germany with his family. After the War Miss Hawley brought the sisters back again, in the hope of obtaining teaching positions for them, one being a fairly talented artist. But Germans were far from popular in those days and the kind attempt was fruitless. Both were remembered in Miss Hawley's will. When her father died in 1899, Mary became even more of a recluse, completely under the domination of her mother. Tales are told of the old lady's parsimony that are nearly incredible. She wouldn't trust a neighbor's small boy with a nickel's worth of milk until he trudged home again and brought back the nickel. Mary had to patch and re-patch her blouses, and when a fall in Bridgeport drove her knee through her skirt, she had to mend the skirt and go on wearing it. No telephone was permitted in the house until three days before Mrs. Hawley's death, when the doctor insisted upon it. This was a woman who possessed several million dollars.

The mother did not die until she was ninety, and Mary was sixty-three. At once a change in the daughter was noticed, but she had worn the yoke for so long that the pattern of her life was pretty well set. She still sat in the bay-window sewing and still walked up and down the street after dusk; but she appeared in new clothes and furs, and people learned that a tiled bathroom and many other improvements were being installed in the old house. Before long the family carriage horses, "Samson" and "Dewey" were replaced by a big Pierce-Arrow car, and Miss Hawley seems to have had a little fun at last, taking daily drives and extended motor trips with new-made friends.

It was in 1922 that she made her first gift to Newtown, the Hawley School. After that, in quick succession came the fund to provide for the care of the cemetery, the beautiful gates and the Memorial Vault. The magnificent Edmond Town Hall, the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, the Memorial Bridge and the handsome Library were all planned by her but some of them were not completed until after her death. People who remember her in those days say that she spoke so fast and breathlessly that she gave the impression of one who feared she would not have the time to get everything done.

She died in 1930 and her famous will, disposing of millions to charities and civic organizations is too well known to need reviewing. It is to be hoped that her generous spirit is aware of the gratitude and appreciation which surely will be eternally felt by her fellow townspeople.

Five years after the coming of the twentieth century Newtown celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the purchase of the land from the Indians. The account of this occasion is described in the book, "Newtown's Bicentennial, 1705-1905." Now fifty years more have passed and our Town, proud of its long history and grateful for the blessings which have been bestowed upon it, looks forward with trust in the Almighty, to an even more distinguished future.

THE PRESENT

Chapter I

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE PRESENT TOWN

Description

In area, Newtown is the fifth largest town in the State. It is roughly triangular in shape and covers 38,644 acres or 60 square miles.

The very characteristics which attracted the early settlers remain today some of Newtown's greatest assets. The wide green valleys, the rolling hills, rocky crags and beautiful trees give us a sense of quiet permanence and beauty. To preceding generations they meant that and more, for through the years the inhabitants depended heavily on field and forest for their livelihood. Those who settled here had come to Newtown to make their permanent home, and they took good care of their chosen town. We have particular reason to be grateful for the combination of nature and circumstance that kept the town agricultural and preserved its natural beauty.

Geological Characteristics

Actually it almost happened otherwise. For many years there was considerable interest in mineral deposits of the area, and several mines were opened. In 1837, Charles Upham Shepard, M.D., wrote for the governor of the State "A Report on the Geological Survey of Connecticut". It contains many references to Newtown from which the following are quoted:

"An ore nearly identical in appearance with that just described (magnetic iron ore at Redding, RRM), it being both fine granular and intermingled with chlorite, occurs in Newtown, on a wooded swell of land, a little east of Judson's quarry. It is found disseminated through seams of quartz in gneiss As the rock is much concealed by soil, it will not be easy to settle the question whether or not a profitable bed of ore does here exist."

"At Sandy Hook, Newtown, about fifty rods north of the spot where search was made for coal, is a tunnel carried for a short distance through

BEDROCK GEOLOGY OF
NEWTOWN, CONN.*



*Copied from the Preliminary Geological Map of Connecticut, by H. E. Gregory and H. H. Robinson, 1906.

a projecting quartz vein contained in mica-slate. It is called a silvermine. Attached to the walls of this excavation, traces of galena and iron pyrite were observable.”

“The only serious attempt which has been made to obtain coal in the primitive of Connecticut, is at Sandy Hook in Newtown. The excavations have been made into a highly glazed, plumbaginous mica-slate, on the banks of a small river (the Pohtatuck).”

Shepherd goes on to discuss this at length saying that “it would be a liberal estimate to rate the richest samples as containing ten per cent of carbon and concluding “all expectation of coal ought to be abandoned without delay.”

“The chlorite of Newtown is well adapted to the manufacture of ink-stands and similar objects, and has already been employed to some extent for this purpose.”

Under section XV. Materials for Flagging, Tiling, and Paving, Shepard states “The quarries of gneissoid flagging stone in the western part of the State, are in a more fissible and easily cleavable rock. A few of the most important of them are the following: at Thatchersville (Bridgeport), Burr’s quarry Fairfield, Judson’s quarry Newtown, Mine Hill Roxbury, Banks quarry Redding.” (Judson’s quarry is at the corner of Mine Hill and Rocky Ridge roads in the Dodgingtown section.)

From Charles Burr Todd’s “In Olde Connecticut” is the following passage: “Lower down the Housatonic Valley at Sandy Hook in Newtown, we have a gold mine which was worked by British Soldiers in the Revolution and casks of its ore were sent to England for treatment. From one pound of its ore 75 cents in gold and 11 cents in silver were taken, if the assayer is to be believed.” Since then there has been sporadic interest in possible mineral resources although information on the subject is sparse. A study of the geological makeup of the State is now in process under the joint auspices of the Connecticut Survey and the U. S. Geological Survey. Until that is completed our knowledge of the earth beneath us seems likely to remain very limited.

A 1951 publication of the State Geological and Natural History Survey, by J. A. Sohon listed the following minerals from Newtown:

1. Chlorite, Green plate-like crystals of metallic silicates (aluminum, iron, magnesium)
2. Damourite, Soft but unelastic variety of mica—usually pearly luster
3. Diaspore, aluminum hydroxide
4. Fluorite, Fluorspar—calcium fluoride—green, blue, purple and yellow crystals (source of fluoride)
5. Gold
6. Kyanite, Aluminum silicate—blue or green bladed crystals
7. Magnetite, Black iron oxide—attracted by magnet—good iron ore
8. Pyrite, “Fool’s Gold”—yellow iron disulfide—source of sulfuric acid

9. Rutile, Titanium dioxide—red-brown metallic luster—used as coating for welding rods
10. Talc, Magnesium silicate
11. Tourmaline, Silicate—various colors—clear varieties used in jewelry.

Geologically, Newtown lies in the Western Highland area of Connecticut, a section extending from the New York State line to the rim of the Connecticut River valley. This rim lies north to south from Granby on the Massachusetts border through Farmington, Bristol, Bethany and New Haven to Orange on Long Island Sound. The Highland is underlain by crystalline rock, formed through long geological phases of intense deformation, erosion, deposition and upheaval of the earth surface. Of more importance in terms of the visible results was the subsequent period of glaciation. In his report "The Glacial Geology of Connecticut", F. R. Flint estimates the thickness of the ice cover over Connecticut as 1,650 feet. The advance of the ice sheets eroded the higher areas, filled in the low, and scattered materials from distant places over the entire region. It left fine views from the upland areas, and the rounded hills which soften the landscape. It left the good soil of the meadows as well as the rocky till on many hillsides which, being too rough for cultivation, accounts for the sizeable woodlands. Flint also notes that in the valley of Deep Brook in Newtown there is evidence of glacial lake deposits at an elevation of 470 feet.

As will be seen from the accompanying diagram five types of bedrock underlie the town: Becket Gneiss along the Bethel town line in the Taunton Hill district; Brookfield Diorite in the immediate vicinity of Hawleyville; Thomaston Granite—gneiss in the Lake Zoar area; and Hartland Schist in a section beginning at the northern corner of the town and running southeast to include the Borough, Castle Hill and Taunton Pond regions. The remainder and far largest part of the town is underlain by Danbury Grano-diorite Gneiss.

Rivers and Ponds

The Housatonic River which flows along the entire northeastern boundary of the town is today an important source of electric power. Large dams hold its water back to form Lake Zoar and Shepaug Lake.

The only other stream of importance is the Pohtatuck River which flows south to north across the township to enter the Housatonic north of Sandy Hook, just above the old Route #6 crossing. Along the Pohtatuck are located some of the historic manufacturing establishments of Sandy Hook.

The town abounds in "ponds" as they are invariably called, mostly fed by springs or small streams. In the south of town is Castle Meadow Pond in the Hattertown section. Curtis Pond, which is a favorite of the school children who are invited there for summer swimming, and Warner Pond are both near Route #34 east of Sandy Hook. Cavanaugh Pond is in the Hanover district. Taunton Pond, which is over a mile long is the largest of the group

and is the source of the Borough water supply. Mannhardt (formerly Carp Pond) lies just to the south of it on Taunton Lake road.

Parks and Forests

Rocky Glen State Park is situated on the Pohtatuck River west of Sandy Hook. Only 41 acres in area, it contains one of the most beautiful hemlock groves in Connecticut. Fishing is allowed.

The Paugussett Forest is a State park of 1016 acres. It is located along the shore of the Housatonic in the northeast section of the Town. It is heavily wooded and undeveloped. Hunting is allowed.

At the head of Main Street, in a tiny park, stands the Soldiers' and Sailors' monument, gift of Mary E. Hawley, in honor of Newtown's fighting men and women. It was erected in 1931. Every Memorial Day since, the patriotic organizations of the town gather here to honor their fellow citizens.

On two bronze plaques in front of the Monument are the names of those who have fought for our nation from the Revolution through World War I. The lists for recent wars are, unfortunately, not complete.

The Newtown Forestry Association holds a tract of 18 acres of woodland on Castle Hill Road, near the center of the Town. This land was left to the association to be used as a town forest.

The Newtown Park Commission has recently acquired a park site to be developed as a recreation center. (See, also, Chapter IV.)

Fairfield State Hospital

The Fairfield State Hospital is located on Mile Hill in the South Center district. It was created by act of the General Assembly in 1929, to provide care for mental patients from Litchfield and Fairfield Counties and the lower Naugatuck valley towns in New Haven County. The hospital has responsibility to receive and to care for all patients from this district who are referred for treatment by their family physicians.

Supervision and control of policies are vested in a Board of Trustees which is appointed by the Governor.

The hospital plant is modern and attractive. Ward buildings include a 300 bed admission and intensive treatment building under construction, a medical department with medical, tuberculosis and infirmary wards, operating room, x-ray and dental offices, three small units for treatment of disturbed patients, and two large continued treatment buildings. There is a well equipped laboratory. Modern and complete utilities are provided to support all requirements of the treatment services.

In 1953-54 the hospital cared for an average of 2850 resident patients and received and discharged approximately 100 patients each month. Some 400 patients are maintained at home on convalescent visit. Per capita expenditures are under \$5.00 per day per patient.

The staff has grown to a total of 847 employees including 18 physicians,

43 registered nurses, 376 psychiatric aides, and 32 technicians and special therapists.

The Fairfield State Hospital conducts recognized training programs in psychiatry and psychiatric nursing under the leadership of accredited clinical and nursing personnel. The hospital has pioneered in the development of psychotherapy, occupational and industrial rehabilitation programs, shock treatments, and the use of antibiotic and sedative drugs. These training and research activities are supported by affiliations with neighboring hospitals and with Yale University School of Medicine.

The citizens of Newtown take pride in the high standards and reputation of this large institution within their midst. Increasingly the staff of the Hospital and their families find their places in activities of the town. Likewise local citizens find through volunteer services, entertainments, etc. ways to express their interest and support of the Hospital's program.

Population Changes and Trends

The U. S. census reported the 1950 population of Newtown as 7,448 inclusive of the students and patients of the Fairfield State Hospital. In the absence of any actual enumeration since that date, figures on our 1955 population can therefor be based on estimate only.

As will be seen from the accompanying chart Newtown's population had remained fairly stationary for over a hundred years. In the 1930's it began a period of growth which was further accelerated in the census period 1940-1950. Although there had been a definite increase in employment opportunities within the town itself, unquestionably a large portion of recent expansion is made up of people who work in the surrounding cities. Located as it is some 20 miles from the highly populated Long Island Sound Area, Newtown avoids the congestion of the industrial areas; yet has the advantages of accessibility. Rimmed about by the manufacturing centers of Ansonia-Derby, Bridgeport, Danbury and Waterbury, and within commuting distance of New York City, Newtown is, for better or for worse, in the direct path of the suburban movement.

Newtown's total population increased from 4063 in 1940 to 7448 in 1950. Omitting patients and students at the Fairfield State Hospital, the town population was about 3100 for 1940 and 5300 for 1950. This represented an average increase of a little more than 5½% yearly for the 10 year census period. Assuming that the town has continued to grow at the same rate during the intervening years, the population for 1955 would be only about 6900 and for 1960 it may not exceed 9000.

Various figures which are available annually and indirectly reflect population change would appear to support a higher rate of increase.

In the public schools the annual percentage increases in average daily enrollment have averaged 10.6% during the past five years. (Average daily enrollment for 1949-50 was 676; for 1954-55 it was 1128 as of April 31, 1955).

POPULATION OF NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT AT INTERVALS FROM 1774 TO 1955.

SOURCE — STATE OF CONNECTICUT, REGISTER AND MANUAL, 1954
(EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS 500 PERSONS.)



Annual percentage increases in property values on the Grand List as reported by the Board of Assessors have averaged 8.6%. (For 1950 the Grand List was \$12,744,600; for 1954 it was \$17,719,330.)

If the population (excluding the State Hospital) has grown 8% yearly since 1950, it would be about 7800 in 1955 and may reach 11,500 in 1960.

Whether one's personal bent is toward the conservative 5½% estimate of the 1940-1950 period or the 8% rate, the most telling evidence is probably that of personal observation,—the newcomers we meet daily, the sales and transfers of property we hear about, the new houses we see going up along every road. These are unmistakable evidence of the growth of the town.

An expanding population affects every phase of town life. On the one hand, it brings new wealth into the town, increases business opportunities, tends to increase property values and raise wages and employment opportunity. In general it vitalizes the community economy. On the other hand it increases the demand upon schools, roads, fire protection, transportation, and all other public services. The challenge in the situation is, of course, that of being sufficiently foresighted to keep the two sides of the problem in balance.

Present Day Communities

Although the town has grown rapidly in recent years it is still semi-rural in character and appearance. In population, however, the township is highly decentralized with many small communities scattered throughout the area. The Borough of Newtown was the first to obtain a post office, receiving its franchise in 1800. Three other communities have their own post offices: Botsford (Cold Springs) secured a postal grant in 1834, Hawleyville in 1844 and Sandy Hook in 1862. The Newtown office is the largest of the four. It has three rural carriers who cover a total of 135 miles daily. Sandy Hook also has rural mail delivery.

Although the old school districts are no longer in use as such their names survive as the current designations of various communities and sections of the Town. They are:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. North Center (1717) | 11. Sandy Hook (1779) |
| 2. Middle (1718) | 12. Middle Gate (1783) |
| 3. Taunton (1738) | 13. Gray's Plain (1784) |
| 4. Zoar and Wapping (1745) | 14. Head of Meadow (1784) |
| 5. Land's End (1745) | 15. Hopewell (17--) ? |
| 6. Palestine (1748) | 16. Halfway River (1786) |
| 7. Hanover (1755) | 17. Gregory's Orchard (1788) |
| 8. South Center (1761) | 18. Toddy's Hill (1789) |
| 9. Lake George (1768) | 19. Huntingtown (1794) |
| 10. Flat Swamp (1769) | 20. Walnut Tree Hill (1866) |

The bounds of these districts are shown on the map of Newtown, published by the Newtown League of Women Voters, 1952.



Chapter II

ECONOMIC LIFE OF TOWN

There is no heavy industry in Newtown at present, but many sand and gravel trucks carry much of Newtown away daily. Approximately twenty interesting kinds of light industry exist in various parts of the town, ranging from Photo Science Laboratories on Walnut Tree Hill to smelting in Botsford, lamp adapting in Hawleyville and home manufacturing of Kabobs in Gray's Plain. No particular type of industry is confined to any one section of town. For instance, there is machine tool making in Sandy Hook and also in Newtown. There is a plastic corporation in Sandy Hook and one in Hawleyville, each doing different things with plastics.

In the Palestine District famous precision gauges are made. These as well as many other products from Newtown's industries are sent to all parts of the United States and many foreign countries.

In the Glen, Sandy Hook, along the Pohtatuck River are two factories originally belonging to the New York Belting and Packing Company but now housing separate industries. The so-called "upper factory" is the home of the Plastic Molding Corporation and the "lower factory" the home of the Fabric Fire Hose Corporation. The latter which makes cotton rubber-lined hose is one of the oldest companies in the United States. It started in Warwick, New York in 1869 and moved here in 1900. It is the only remaining manufacturer of fire hose exclusively.

At least two companies in Newtown are operated by the third or fourth generation. In Berkshire is the folding box company of S. Curtis and Son, Inc. (originally a comb and button industry). Located on the original site, it is now operated by the fourth generation of Curtises.

The McKenzie Engineering Company which makes industrial machinery is another "several generations" industry, with the third generation of the family now operating the business. Established in New Rochelle, New York, in 1913 this company came to Newtown in 1935. The present factory, situated in South Center District, was built in 1950.

Handmade flowers, hydraulic equipment, precision parts for manufacturers in various industries, dairy brushes and all kinds of wood cabinets are made in this town; also leather novelties, Yankee Clipper gardening tools and colonial type metal articles. "Scrabble" was born in Newtown in 1947 in a little one-room schoolhouse (formerly Flat Swamp School) in Dodgingtown. William A. Upham invented the tea bag in 1909 in Hawleyville.

Newtown abounds in special services such as bakeries, delicatessen, frozen foods, catering, florists shops, lumber yards, welding, well drilling, photography and a veterinary hospital—to mention a few.

Among many antique shops in Berkshire, Sandy Hook, Dodgingtown, South Center and Hawleyville is one run entirely for charity. It is "Land's End Country Store" in Hawleyville (in the former Land's End one-room schoolhouse). It is for the "Bobby Clark Memorial Fund" at the Lenox Hill Hospital, New York, and is carried on by Bobby's mother.

Commercial centers are: near the Town Hall and the Flagpole on Main Street; the shopping center on Queen Street; in Sandy Hook, in Botsford, in Hawleyville, in Dodgingtown and in Huntingtown.

Banks—Two banks serve Newtown.

1. The Connecticut National Bank, Bridgeport. (Newtown Office)
Hours:—9 to 3 Monday through Friday
4 to 6 Friday
9 to 12 Saturday

2. Newtown Savings Bank.

Hours:—9 to 3 Monday through Friday

This bank is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 1955.

Newspaper—The Newtown Bee

The Newtown Bee is a weekly newspaper, founded in 1877. Its colorful history is recorded in the first section of this book.

The current circulation figures have reached over 7000, the number of pages 32. In addition to local news, it carries items from surrounding towns. It is famous for its advertising, which covers a 25 to 30 mile radius.

The Bee has received many awards. In 1948 the Connecticut Editorial Association gave it the first prize for best editorial, first prize for best feature

story, and first prize for mechanical excellence. Since then there have been several other awards.

The Bee Publishing Company, which publishes the newspaper, is located on Church Hill Road. It does a great variety of commercial printing.

Agriculture

The 1930's saw the beginning of the major shift away from an agricultural community. This has continued every year since. The most recent picture in Newtown in terms of numbers of people living on farms or part-time farms (with the years 1920 and 1935 given for comparison to show the trend) is as follows:

	1920	1935	1950
Number of farms	422	389	175
Land in farms (acres)	27,743	22,012	14,046
Cows, including heifers that have calved	1,800	1,638	1,237
Whole milk sold (gallons)	1,170,312	1,010,692	914,302

Chickens

Number of farms	371	254	146
Number of chickens 4 mos. old and over	19,306	23,965	22,229
Chicken eggs sold (dozen)	134,975	247,799	230,518

Source: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce
Washington 25, D.C.

The type of farms listed in order of importance is dairy, poultry, live-stock, vegetable, fruit. This list is based on numbers of each and the value of products sold. Dairy and poultry farms show a trend to grow larger and produce more. This is because of specialization and the need of larger income.

According to Newtown's 1954 Grand List there were 1581 neat cattle valued for tax purposes at \$123,990; approximately 190 sheep, \$570; 58 horses, \$3,300; poultry (no number given), \$16,820.

Chapter III

EDMOND TOWN HALL

As Newtown celebrates its 250th Anniversary, Edmond Town Hall celebrates its 25th, having been presented to the Selectmen on August 22nd, 1930, to serve as the seat of the Town Government, general meeting place and recreation center.

In the past 25 years it has been the scene of many Town meetings, Commencement Exercises, rummage sales, Church fairs, dog shows, square dances, antiques auctions and Town Players performances. Day-by-day it has had a continuous parade of visitors going to the Post Office and to various Town offices, at night to the movies and, on Monday nights, a lesser group, meeting in the Town Court to serve the ends of Justice.

In its 25 year history, Edmond Town Hall has been the focal point of the community and, to newcomers and tourists, as well as to townspeople of long residence, a distinctive feature of Newtown. Its classic Georgian architecture makes it unique among Connecticut town buildings, while its many-sided usefulness is the envy of other communities.

The administration of the Town Hall is as unique as the building itself. While the title is vested in the Town, the building is run by a bi-partisan Board of Managers, consisting of three Republicans and three Democrats elected for six-year terms in accordance with an Act of the Connecticut State Legislature on February 24, 1931. The Manager of Edmond Town Hall has served in that capacity ever since the building was opened.

Along with looking after the many details of maintaining the building, he has charge of managing the Motion Picture Theatre. A favorite among area movie-goers for its excellent choice of pictures and comfortable seats, Edmond Town Hall Theatre has recently been provided with a modernized ventilating system, new carpeting, a new wide screen and frame, and anamorphic lenses enabling the showing of either conventional movies or cinema-scope productions.

Besides the Theatre, the facilities of Edmond Town Hall include the Alexandria Room, a large meeting room on the top floor with its own kitchen and stage; smaller meeting rooms; the gymnasium, scene of a great variety of activities in the course of a year; the Post Office; bowling alleys; Town Court; and offices for the First Selectman, Judge of Probate, Town Clerk, Tax Assessors, Tax Collector and Visiting Nurse Association.

We are prone to take for granted our beautiful Town Hall and to accept the unique facilities which it provides, without questioning the cost of maintaining such a building, let alone building it. Actually, Edmond Town Hall, its maintenance and addition have cost Newtown nothing. The building was planned by the late Mary Elizabeth Hawley whose birthday is celebrated on August 22nd and the late Arthur Treat Nettleton, Miss Hawley's financial advisor. The construction was financed by a gift of \$750,000 from Miss



The Edmond Town Hall

Hawley who also set up a Trust Fund of \$250,000 for the maintenance of the building. In 1950 an addition was made on the South side of the building at a cost of \$50,000 entirely paid for by the income from the endowment and the operation of the motion picture theatre.

Edmond Town Hall is named for Miss Hawley's maternal great-grandfather, Judge William Edmond, a native of Waterbury. Born in 1755, Judge Edmond fought in the Revolutionary War action at Ridgefield following Tryon's raid on Danbury. He came to Newtown to practice law in 1782, was a member of Congress from 1791 to 1801 and was a Judge of the Superior Court until his death in 1819.

THE BOROUGH OF NEWTOWN

The Borough of Newtown was incorporated in May 1824 by act of the General Assembly meeting in New Haven and held its first meeting the following month.

The exact boundary lines of the borough as revised and enlarged by the legislature in 1907 may be found in the borough records in the office of the borough clerk. They remain the same today. Using the map of Newtown published by the League of Women Voters of Newtown in 1952 these boundaries may be roughly described as follows: starting at the intersection of Route 25 (So. Main St.) and Borough Lane, proceed along Borough Lane to the New York, New Haven, and Hartford railroad tracks, then northwesterly along the railroad tracks to Hall Lane, westerly along Hall Lane across Currituck Rd., then westerly along the Old Road to Rt. 6 across Rt. 6, then along the east side of Taunton Pond, then southeasterly across Route 202 (Sugar St.), around the Newtown Cemetery and back to Rt. 25 at Borough Lane.

The borough of Newtown as of June 1st. 1955 covers 1252.32 acres which includes 332 residences and 24 commercial properties. The net valuation of these properties is \$3,453,870. These figures show 120 more residences than in 1945 and an increase of \$2,161,540 in net assessed valuation. This increase in assessed valuation is partially due to the revaluation of all properties in the town of Newtown in 1949 and to the recent construction of such large buildings as the Wheeler Shopping Center, the Cianci Building, and the Telephone Company Building as well as several new home developments.

Residents of the borough pay a borough tax of slightly over one mill on a budget of around \$7000 for the year 1954. In return the borough supplies fire hydrants and street lighting as well as a tree planting and tree spraying program along borough roads. The Newtown Water Co., privately owned, supplies water to most residents of the borough.

Borough officials are nominated at a caucus held annually in April. All legal voters of the borough are eligible to participate in this caucus in which

only one slate of officers is presented on a non-partisan basis. Their names appear on the voting machines on borough election day under the label of the Citizens Party. Other nominees may appear on the voting machines by petition according to procedure established by the election laws of the state.

An annual meeting of the legal voters of the borough is held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May at which time electors choose from their number by plurality of ballots the following:

A Warden for a one year term;

2 Burgesses for a 4 year term;

A Clerk for a one year term;

A Treasurer for a one year term;

2 Fire Inspectors for a one year term;

A Tax Collector for a one year term;

A Pound Keeper for a one year term;

2 Assessors for a one year term;

2 Members of the Board of Relief for a one year term;

A Registrar of Voters for a one year term;

A member of the Zoning Commission for a 5 year term;

A member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 5 year term.

In addition to the above, the wardens and burgesses appoint a Tree Warden to serve for one year to develop a plan of tree protection and planting on borough highways.

The Zoning Commission appoints for a one year term a Building Inspector who possesses such powers and performs such duties and services as they may direct. It is his duty to issue building permits for new building or alterations the cost of which is estimated to be \$100 or more and, when work is completed under such permits, to issue certificates of occupancy after he ascertains that zoning regulations have been complied with. He is also required to act upon any written complaints brought to the Board of Zoning Commissioners about alleged violations of the zoning regulations.

“All electors of this state qualified to vote in the town of Newtown, and residing within said territorial limits shall be freemen of said borough, and every elector of this state who shall hereafter have continuously resided within the limits of the borough for the period of six months shall be a freeman of said borough and entitled to vote at all meetings of said borough and eligible to office therein.” (From the Charter of the Borough of Newtown as Amended and Revised in 1931).

The above document plus amendments to the Zoning Ordinances and Regulations describe in detail the duties of all borough officials and the running of borough government. The powers and duties conferred by the charter are too numerous to include here; therefore, it is suggested that for further details the reader refer to the charter itself which is on record with the borough clerk.

The Borough of Newtown is the only part of the town of Newtown which is protected by zoning regulations and ordinances established in 1931. The

present zoning commission is in the process of revising the existing regulations to meet current day problems, and to provide a specific basis for zoning decisions. They hope to have these regulations in effect in the fall of 1955.

A perusal of borough records produces many interesting facts, some of which may be worth recording here.

On May 1, 1883 a committee recommended and it was so passed that the sum of \$600 be appropriated to provide the borough with its first Hook and Ladder truck, the price to be \$525 F.O.B. by steamer to Bridgeport; \$15 for freight to Newtown; \$60 for a shelter for the truck.

In 1884 compensation for the assessors was \$5 each; \$2.50 for each member of the Board of Relief and \$15 for the Tax Collector.

In 1907 the Borough contracted with the Newtown Water Co. to provide fire hydrants at \$30 each per year.

The Borough negotiated with the Lighting Company for the first street lights, 32 in all, in 1915.

The Citizens Ticket, so-called for the first time, was elected in 1919, and the first borough caucus was held in April 1923.

STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT

All units of government in this State are chartered by the Connecticut General Assembly.

The government for our Town was formulated at the time of its incorporation October 1711.

Newtown covers an area of 60.38 sq. miles or 38,644 acres. It contains according to the 1950 official census 7,448 people. The next National census will be taken in 1960 and it is reliably estimated that by that time the figure will increase at least one and a half times!

No matter how big we grow we still will be a Town because in Connecticut every village, borough or city is located within the confines of a town. Where towns are not too large for all the voters to gather under one roof, the Town Meeting is still the legislative body of the town. This is a form of pure democracy which has come down to us from Colonial times and exists only in New England.

TOWN MEETING

Any citizen 21 years of age or older who owns real estate valued on the latest grand list at \$1,000 or more, or personal estate valued on the grand list at \$500 or more, may vote.

The Town Meeting has a wide variety of powers. Every election is considered part of a Town Meeting. Besides the annual election of town officials the important matters dealt with are the making of appropriations; the levy of taxes; the authorization of borrowing; the determination of the manner of using town aid funds for highways and the building and repair of school buildings; enactment of by-laws and ordinances and other questions at issue.

The Selectmen may call special Town Meetings whenever they think it is necessary. They must call a special Town Meeting within 10 days after receiving an application requesting one signed by at least 21 voters.

A warning for each Town Meeting signed by at least 2 of the Selectmen, specifying the object for which it is to be held, must be publicized and the Meeting may act only on those matters.

ELECTION SYSTEM

The political address of each citizen in our town is:

Town	Newtown
County	Fairfield
State Senatorial District	25th
U. S. Congressional District	4th

Who may Vote.

Only residents who have registered with town officials may vote. Once registered, a citizen is on the voting list as long as he remains a resident of Newtown.

Who may register to Vote.

Sessions for “making voters” are held at the Edmond Town Hall by the Selectmen and Town Clerk as advertised. Since these dates are not permanent, they are published each year in ‘The Newtown Bee’ and in a ‘Voter’s Guide’ issued annually by the League of Women Voters of Newtown and distributed widely. The Town Clerk will also inform you of these dates upon request.

To register, you appear in person at one of these sessions with evidence of your qualifications to become a voter.

Qualifications of a Voter.

1. A citizen of the U. S., born or naturalized.
2. 21 years of age or over.
3. A resident of Connecticut at least 12 months and of Newtown at least 6 months.
4. Able to read any part of the Constitution or of the Statutes of Connecticut.
5. Of sound mind and good morals (i.e. not convicted of any serious crime as defined in the laws of Connecticut.).

How to Vote.

Voting in Newtown is by machine. Those who are unfamiliar with this method of voting may see the machine demonstrated at the Edmond Town Hall prior to Election Day on dates announced in the local paper and in the ‘Voter’s Guide’. Demonstration models are also shown at the polling places on Election Day, with instructors from each party in attendance to assist.

Where to Vote.

Newtown has two voting districts. Voters residing in the first district vote at the Edmond Town Hall. The voting place for the second district is the Sandy Hook Fire House.

When to Vote.

State and National elections are held in *even* years on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

Newtown conducts local elections in *odd* years on the first Monday in October.

Whom to Vote for.

National officials (elected in *even* years)

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| for 4 year term | President of the United States |
| for 4 year term | Vice President of the United States |
| for 6 year term | United States Senator |
| for 2 year term | United States Congressman from 4th District |
| for 2 year term | United States Congressman-at-large |

State Officials (alternating in even years with Presidential Elections)

- for 4 year termGovernor
 - for 4 year termLieutenant Governor
 - for 4 year termSecretary of State
 - for 4 year termTreasurer
 - for 4 year termComptroller
 - for 2 year termAttorney General
 - for 2 year termSenator from 25th District
 - for 2 year term2 Representatives from Newtown
- } to Conn.
General
Assembly

County Official

- 4 year term Sheriff of Fairfield County

District Officials

- 4 year term 1 Judge of Probate of the District of Newtown
- 2 year term 17 Justices of the Peace

Local Officials (elected in *odd* years)

- 2 year term3 Selectmen
- 2 year termTown Clerk
- 2 year termTown Treasurer and Agent of Town Deposit Fund
- 2 year termTax Collector
- 4 year termBoard of Assessors
- 4 year termBoard of Tax Review
- 6 year termBoard of Education
- 6 year termBoard of Finance
- 2 year termBoard of Registrars
- 6 year termBoard of Managers of Edmond Town Hall
- 2 year term7 Constables

Absentee voting

If a registered voter expects to be unable to go to the polling place on an election day because of service in the armed forces, a physical disability, illness or out-of-state commitments he may ask the Town Clerk for a blank absentee ballot and mailing instructions. This must be done in person or by mail not more than two months before the date of Election, and it must be returned so that it shall be received by the Town Clerk not later than 6 P.M. of the day prior to Election Day; or if the election be on a Monday, not later than noon of Election Day.

Voting information for those who move

If you move within the town limits, check with the Registrar to make sure you are properly registered at your new address.

If you move from one town to another in Connecticut you retain for a period of one day less than six months, the right to vote in National and State

elections in the town from which you have moved. Your voting privilege does not move with you—you must apply after at least 6 months residence to the officials of that town. This new application will cancel your registration in your former town.

Voters moving to other States are governed by the election laws of the state in which they establish residence.

The Voter and his effectiveness

Your vote can be most effective if you join a political party. If you do not enroll in a political party you may vote at elections but you can not vote at a caucus and you thereby forfeit your right to participate in the selection of candidates. The caucus is the ‘coming together’ of party members. You do not have to join a party, but if you do not you will vote at election time for candidates nominated by someone else. In local elections where many of our Boards are bi-partisan, nomination in the party caucus is practically equivalent to election. This means, in effect, that only those who vote in a caucus have any choice in the selection of many of our town officials.

How a voter may join a party

Membership in a party does not affect your freedom to vote as you please in an election.

The party caucus is the only form of primary election held in Connecticut. You may enroll in a party when you become a voter or by calling in person at the Edmond Town Hall on any day that voters are made or when the Registrars of voters are in session for revising the voting lists on the last Friday in July.

Joining the party is the first step—the next step is to join a political club within that party. As a club member you get to know the people who want to run for office and you can voice your opinion on those best qualified.

In Newtown each party schedules a caucus at least three weeks before an election or convention to nominate local candidates or elect delegates. Caucus dates are published well in advance, in “The Newtown Bee.”

Remember—the power to nominate is as important as the right to elect.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

<i>Elected Officials</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Annual Salary</i>	<i>How Elected</i>	<i>Powers and Duties</i>
Board of Selectmen Bi-partisan 1st Selectman 2nd " 3rd "	2 Years	6000.00 300.00 300.00	1 nominee for 1st Selectman and 1 other nominee for the Board of Select- men from each party. Any 2 may be voted for; 3 are elected.	The Board of Selectmen form the governing power of the town. The 1st Selectman is Town Agent and Chief of Police. The Board's most important powers are those having to do with highways; the appointment of non-elective town officials and employees; administration of town relief and welfare funds; adjustment and settlement of claims against the town; prep- aration of the budget for the coming fiscal year and admin- istration of the current budget (except the school budget). The Board meets once a week and meets with the town officials once a month.
Town Clerk and Registrar	2 Years	\$2000.00 & fees.	1 nominee from each party; 1 may be voted for; 1 is elected.	The Town Clerk is the recorder of all town deeds; registrar of vital statistics; agent of the state and town in issuing dog- licenses and of the state for hunting and fishing licenses. The town clerk is the custodian of all records including voting records and is by statute the clerk of Town Meetings.
Town Treasurer & Agent of Town Deposit Fund.	2 Years	\$1250.00	1 nominee from each party; 1 may be voted for; 1 is elected.	The Treasurer receives and safe- guards all funds of the Town and pays them out on presenta- tion of Selectmen's orders and School Board orders. His re- cords are open at any reason- able time to any taxpayer.
Board of Assessors Bi-partisan 3 Members	4 Years over- lapping terms.	per diem part-time	In the years when 2 are elected, there are 2 nomi- nees from the majority party; 2 may be voted for; 2 are elected. In the years when 1 is elected, there is 1 nominee from the minority party. 1 may be voted for; 1 is elected.	The Assessors place valuations on all taxable property and compile an abstract of such valuations (the Grand List). State law requires a complete revaluation of property every ten years. Newtown's last re- valuation was in 1949. The Grand List is open for in- spection any reasonable time at the Town Clerk's Office. It must be completed by Jan. 31 when it is passed over by the Town Clerk to the Board of Tax Re- view. Appeals go to the Board of Tax Review. Final appeal may go to the Court of Common Pleas.

<i>Elected Officials</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Annual Salary</i>	<i>How Elected</i>	<i>Powers and Duties</i>
Board of Tax Review Bi-partisan 3 Members	4 Years overlapping terms.	per diem part-time	Same as Board of Assessors	The Board of Tax Review hears appeals of taxpayers on assessments and may change the amount of assessments on the books. It holds its first session on the first business day in February and any additional hearings deemed necessary up to February 20. Its work must be completed by February 28.
Tax Collector	2 Years	\$3500.00	1 nominee from each party; 1 may be voted for; 1 is elected.	The Tax Collector collects all money due the town in taxes. He must report to the State Commissioner of Motor Vehicles all automobile taxes still unpaid on November 1st each year, this report rendering automobile licenses subject to cancellation or refusal. Taxes are due May 1 and interest accrues from May 1, if not paid before June 1.
Board of Finance Bi-partisan 6 Members	6 Years overlapping terms.	None	1 nominee from each party; 1 may be voted for; 2 are elected. The Board elects its Chairman and clerk and may make appointments to fill vacancies in its membership.	The Board of Finance holds, by statute, three regular meetings each year on the 1st and 2nd Tuesdays in September and on the 3rd Monday in October. But they meet approximately once a month and will meet at any time to hear requests for special appropriations. The Board of Finance has power to make transfers of unexpended balances from one appropriation to another. The Board's report for the past fiscal year and the estimated budget for the coming year must be published in a local paper in advance of the Annual Town Meeting in October. It recommends the tax rate which is acted upon at the adjourned Town Meeting in April.
Board of Education Bi-partisan 6 Members	6 Years overlapping terms.	None	1 nominee from each party; 1 may be voted for; 2 are elected. The Board elects its Chairman and secretary from its own membership and may make appointments to fill vacancies in its membership.	The Board of Education is required by the State to furnish opportunity 180 days or more each year for elementary and High School education for all children from 6-16 inclusive; and to supply reasonable and desirable transportation. Children 6-16 must attend the public schools or receive equivalent schooling; kindergarten is optional. The Board employs superintendent, principals and teachers; decides on a large part of the curriculum; sets school calendar and entrance policies, size and distribution of classes and controls spending of the school budget.

<i>Elected Officials</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Annual Salary</i>	<i>How Elected</i>	<i>Powers and Duties</i>
Registrars of Voters Bi-partisan 1st Voting Dist. 2 2nd Voting Dist. 2	2 Years	per diem part-time	2 nominees from each party; 2 may be voted for; 4 are elected.	There is a Registrar for each party for the two voting districts of Newtown. They prepare an up-to-date list of registered voters of Newtown and also prepare separate lists of the electors in each voting district for use by the election officials. They also revise the caucus list each year on the last Friday in July. They attend all sessions when voters are made for the purpose of enrollment.
Board of Managers of Edmond Town Hall Bi-partisan 6 Members	6 Years overlapping terms	None	1 nominee from each party; 1 may be voted for; 2 are elected. The Board elects its Chairman and clerk from its own membership and may make appointments to fill vacancies in its membership.	The Board shall care for, maintain and keep in repair the Town Hall and its equipment and grounds and employ those who are needed. The endowment income and all receipts from the operation of its facilities are accounted for monthly to the Town Treasurer who in turn is authorized to pay all bills upon order of the Board.
Judge of Probate	4 Years	None—Statutory fees.	(Elected at state elections.) 1 nominee from each party; 1 is voted for; 1 is elected.	The Probate Judge of the Probate Court for the District of Newtown handles probate of estates, trusts, commitments to institutions, guardianships and conservatorships. In addition he can waive the five day marriage law. While serving he must by statute be an elector within the probate district of Newtown. By statute he appoints a clerk of the probate court.
Justices of the Peace— 17 Justices	2 Years	None—Statutory fees.	(Elected at State elections.) 9 nominees from each party; 9 may be voted for; 17 are elected.	A Justice of the Peace must be sworn in by January 10 following election, or he will be considered as having refused the office. Qualified Justices of the Peace may administer oaths, perform civil marriage ceremonies, and take acknowledgements and verification of legal papers or act as Notary Public.
Constables 7	2 Years	Fees and mileage.	4 nominees from each party; 4 may be voted for; 7 are elected.	To qualify, a constable must after election be sworn in and post a \$1000 bond. Constables who qualify may serve writs, summonses and complaints, and may make arrests. They are employed at times as traffic officers.

APPOINTIVE OFFICIALS

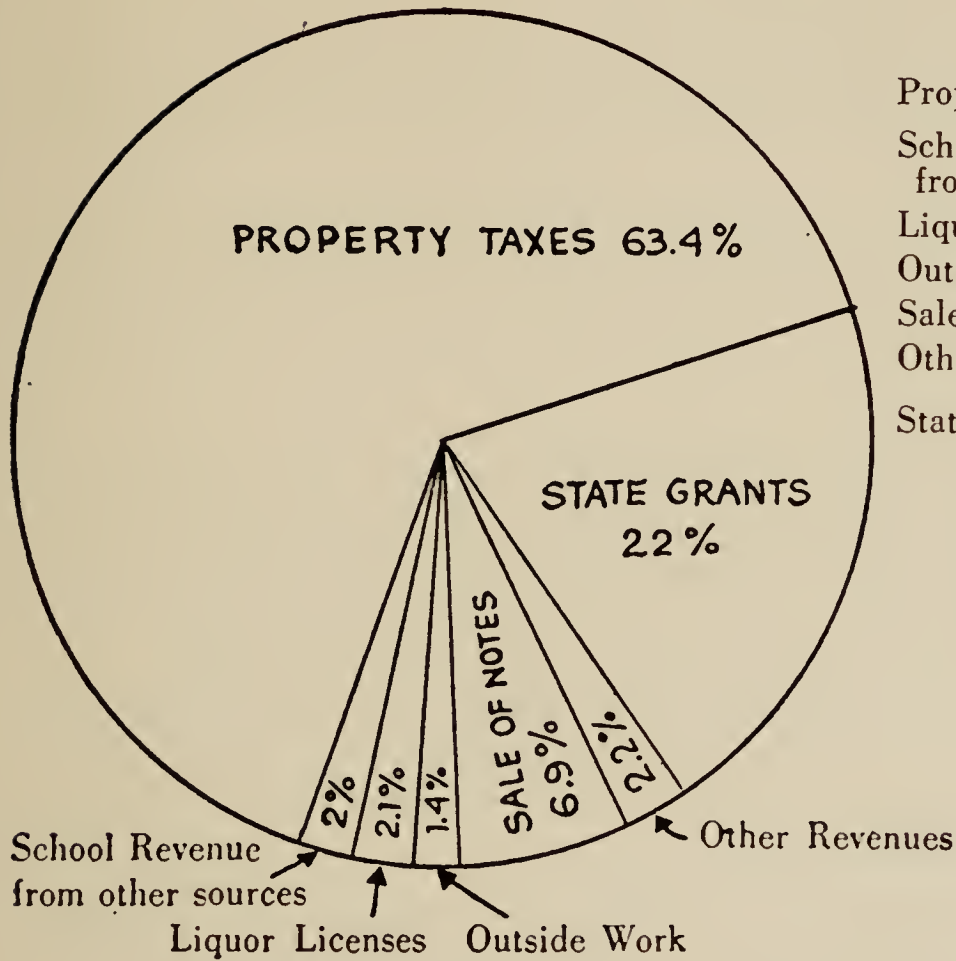
<i>Appointive Officials</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Annual Salary</i>	<i>How appointed</i>	<i>Powers and Duties</i>
Clerk to the Selectmen	1 Year	\$2600.00	By the Selectmen	The Clerk to the Selectmen keeps the books and performs all clerical work for the Selectmen.
Auditor	1 Year	\$1500.00	By the Board of Finance with the approval of the Tax Commissioner of the State.	The financial transactions of Newtown are audited and accounting records examined every year. The Auditor's report with comments and recommendations, is printed in each Annual Town Report.
Judge of the Town Court of Newtown	4 Years	\$1450.00	By the General Assembly on nomination by the Governor.	The Judge of the Town Court of Newtown takes the oath prescribed by law for judicial officers. He is presiding officer of the Town Court of Newtown. (see article on "Courts and Juries").
Deputy Judge	4 Years	\$75.00 and extra whenever he holds court.	By the General Assembly on nomination by the Governor.	The Deputy Judge serves in the absence or inability of the Judge.
Prosecuting Attorney	4 Years	\$1200.00	By the Judge of the Town Court of Newtown.	The Prosecuting Attorney prosecutes for the Town Court of Newtown.
Assistant Prosecutor	4 Years	\$50.00 and extra when he serves.	By the Judge of the Town Court of Newtown.	The Assistant Prosecutor serves in the absence or disability of the Prosecuting Attorney.
Town Counsel	1 Year	Fee basis	By the Selectman	The Town Counsel gives opinions on the legality of Town actions and of the call for Town Meetings.
Probation Officer	4 Years	\$50.00	By the Judge of the Town Court of Newtown.	The Probation Officer functions in cases referred to him by the Judge or Deputy Judge.
Health Officer	3 Years part-time	Fee basis	Proposed by the Selectman after approval by the State Commissioner of Health.	The Health Officer of Newtown is required to be a licensed physician. His duties include control of communicable diseases, supervising general sanitation, inspection of restaurants at 3 month intervals and the inspection of health hazards or nuisances upon complaint of any resident.

<i>Appointive Officials</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Annual Salary</i>	<i>How appointed</i>	<i>Powers and Duties</i>
School Nurse	1 Year	\$4900.00	By Board of Education	The Nurse administers First Aid and gives advice in various health situations. She assists in giving eye tests to every child every year, physical tests every third year and hearing tests every third year. She also assists the dental hygienist, co-operates in the chest X-ray program and in the Infantile Paralysis vaccine program.
Visiting Nurses	1 Year	Part-time	By the Board of Directors of the Visiting Nurse Association of Newtown, Inc.	A staff of two Registered Nurses offers home nursing service to the sick of the community. They also have an office in the Town Hall where they see patients.
Tree Warden	1 Year	Fee basis	By the Selectman	The Tree Warden advises on trees to be pruned or removed along the highways.
Dog Warden	1 Year	Fee basis	By the Selectman	The Dog Warden keeps stray dogs at least 5 days, after which he may dispose of them. He has a list of all licensed dogs in Newtown.
Library Committee 24 Trustees	Life Membership	None	Appointed by the Trustees to fill vacancies.	The Trustees act as the governing body for the administration of the affairs of the Cyrenius H. Booth Library.
Elementary School Building Committee 7 Members	While active	None	By Town Meeting	The Committee advises on sites, plans and construction of the new Sandy Hook elementary school.
Board of Fire Commissioners 7 Members	1 Year	None	Each of the five Fire Companies appoints one member. These five choose two other members who are not associated officially with any Fire Company. These seven members appoint a Coordinator.	The Board of Fire Commissioners is the policy making group for the Fire Companies. At each monthly meeting it examines the operations of the previous month, including expenditures, and authorizes the payment by the town of the Fire Department obligations incurred. The Board handles no money but does operate within a budget figure that is approved at Town Meeting.
Park Commission 6 Members	2 Years	None	Appointed by various organizations on approval of the Selectmen. The Chairman and Secretary are chosen by the Commission from its membership.	The Park Commission meets monthly to decide on the development and future plans for the recently acquired recreational park. The only permanent member of the Commission is the Health Officer.

TOWN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

October 1, 1953 to September 30, 1954

Receipts



Property Taxes \$406,598.36

School Revenue
from other sources 13,089.76

Liquor Licenses 13,560.00

Outside Work 9,156.75

Sale of Notes 44,850.00

Other Revenues 14,713.30

State Grants

Schools 88,233.76—13.8%

Roads 46,293.35— 7.2%

Welfare 2,955.44— 0.5%

Other 2,907.80— 0.5%

Total \$642,358.52

Disbursements

Town Government \$ 32,055.17

Highways & Roads .. 108,809.60

Protection

Fire 18,358.72

Police 3,799.65

Telephone 9,351.18

Traffic 684.29

Civil Defense 100.00

Welfare 12,453.06

Debt Service

School 18,958.25

Other 1,215.62

School Debt Retire-

ment 70,000.00

Schools 272,035.84

Purchases

Property 34,950.00

Grader 12,000.00

Revenues dispersed .. 15,239.03

Miscellaneous

Health 2,040.40

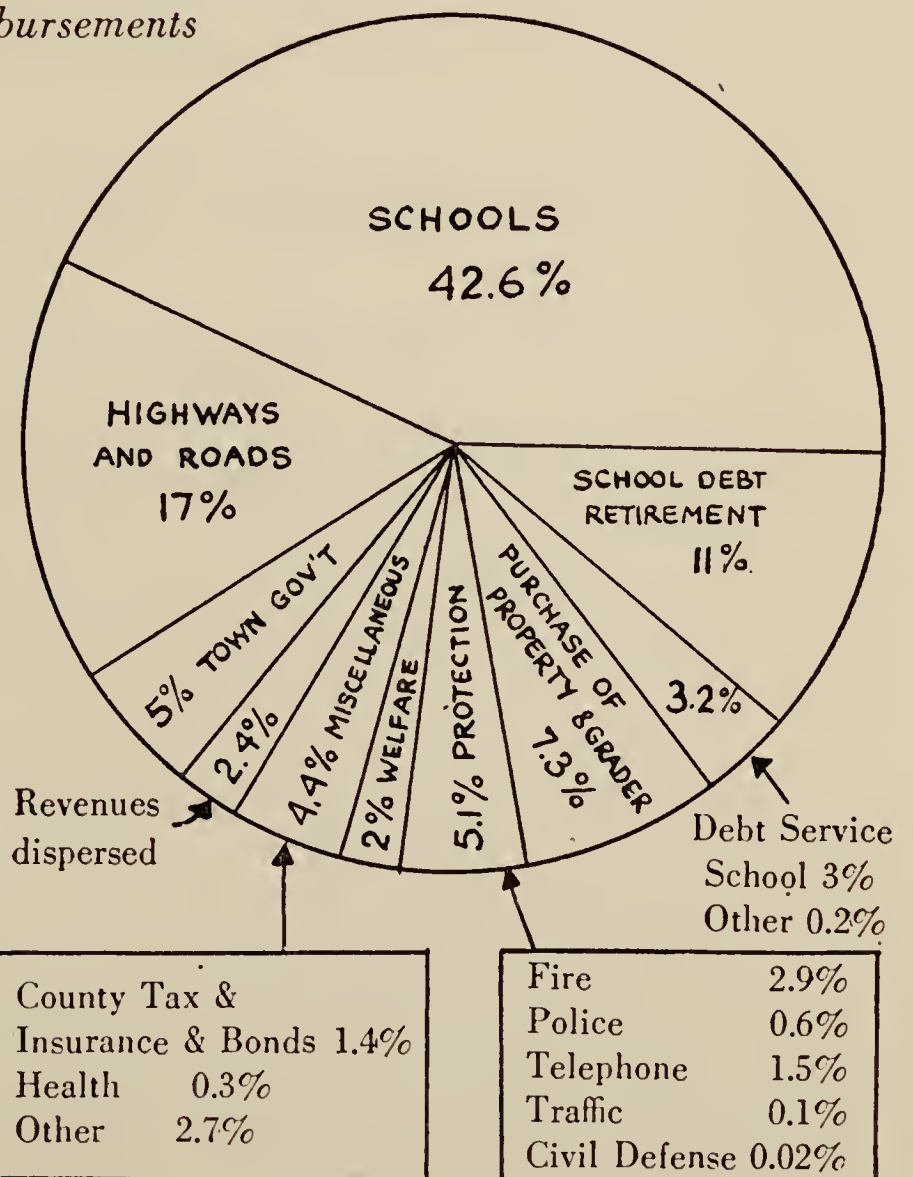
County Tax, In-

surance and

Bonds 8,902.20

Other 17,422.03

Total \$638,375.04



County Tax &
Insurance & Bonds 1.4%

Health 0.3%

Other 2.7%

Fire 2.9%

Police 0.6%

Telephone 1.5%

Traffic 0.1%

Civil Defense 0.02%

COURTS AND JURIES

In the Connecticut Courts the place of trial is determined by the severity of the penalty involved and by the place of residence of the parties involved or location of the accident or misdemeanor.

By Statute no jury shall be used in any Town Court. In all civil actions brought to any Town Court the plaintiff shall be deemed to have waived the right of trial by jury.

Juries for the Superior Court and the Court of Common Pleas are chosen from the roster of voters by a committee appointed by our Selectmen. This list is forwarded by the Town Clerk to the Clerk of Court who notifies the citizen when and where he is to serve.

THE PROBATE COURT for the District of Newtown (which happens to be the township of Newtown) is presided over by the Probate Judge for the District. He is the only judge elected directly by the people—elected for a four year term at State election by a plurality of votes. He has an office in Edmond Town Hall. He handles probate of estates, trusts, commitments to institutions, and guardianship cases and conservatorship cases. In addition he can waive the 5 day marriage law. The Probate Judge shall appoint a Clerk of the Probate Court for the District.

THE TOWN COURT OF NEWTOWN has a Judge and a Deputy Judge appointed by the General Assembly, on nomination by the Governor for a term of four years (or an interim appointment of two years until the Legislature next convenes).

The Prosecutor and Assistant Prosecutor and Probation officer are appointed by the Presiding Judge. The only requirement is that they must be citizens.

Criminal Cases: The Town Court of Newtown has jurisdiction over all criminal offenses committed within the limits of the town by people over the age of sixteen, punishable by a fine not exceeding \$250.00 or by a jail term not exceeding six months or both. If a judge hears a case which in his opinion should have a punishment greater than he is authorized to impose, he transfers or binds it over to the Superior Court for action. Appeals in criminal cases are taken to the Court of Common Pleas.

Civil Cases: The Town Court of Newtown has jurisdiction in all matters at law in which the debt, damage or matter in demand does not exceed the sum of \$500.00 and provided the parties involved or either of them, are residents of Newtown. It has jurisdiction in all cases of summary process where the premises to be recovered are wholly within the limits of Newtown. Cases involving over \$500.00 are tried by the Court of Common Pleas, or may be taken direct to the Superior Court if they involve over \$2,500. Any person receiving an adverse judgment may appeal to the next Court of Common Pleas.

The *Small Claims* session of the Town Court of Newtown is presided over by the same judge and has jurisdiction in all matters where the debt does not exceed \$100.00. The only cost is \$1.50 entry fee. Any resident of Newtown, or any non-resident with a claim against a Newtown resident, can come to this court and be heard without an attorney. There is no appeal from the decision of this court. If a citizen prefers he may ask to have his case heard in the Civil side of the Town Court from which there is an appeal even though the amount involved is small.

PROTECTION

Under Protection in Newtown are included the following departments:
Fire, Police, Civil Defense and Ambulance.

When Newtown's telephone service changed from Manual to Dial in June 1953, a General Switchboard (PBX) was installed in the Town Hall to aid in Town Protection.

There are two circuits: For Emergency Use only, and for incoming calls only. Calls for Police, Fire, Ambulance and Civil Defense are handled through the central Switchboard which is staffed 24 hours a day. The telephone number is Garden 6-4425.

Police Protection

There is at present in Newtown one full-time policeman who was hired by the Board of Selectmen in 1952.

The State Police work in very close cooperation with our own town policeman.

The elected constables may be called upon to direct traffic and to make arrests.

Newtown has no town jail. It uses the county jail in Danbury.

Police Emergency Telephone:

Newtown Police: Garden 6-4425

State Police: ask Operator for Enterprise 8800

Newtown Ambulance Association

The Newtown Ambulance Association was formed in 1941 after the Rotary Club appealed to the townspeople for funds to purchase an ambulance. It is now supported by annual contributions by citizens and is free only to town residents. All drivers contribute their services. Telephone: Garden 6-4425

Civil Defense

The Civil Defense Organization, as it now is, was set up in 1950. Under it Newtown is a receiving center.

The Town Civil Defense is set up under State direction. There are County Directors and Town Directors.

The Director of Civil Defense in Newtown is appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

The Auxiliary State Police are volunteers connected with the State Police who work in conjunction with Newtown Civil Defense Auxiliary Police in case of emergency. The Auxiliary Police are one unit of the Civil Defense Organization. Telephone: Garden 6-4425

Fire Protection

Newtown's present Fire Department consists of five Fire Companies: Newtown, Sandy Hook, Hawleyville, Dodgingtown, and Botsford (the youngest).

Newtown's Fire Department of today was established by resolution adopted at a Special Town Meeting on Sept. 8, 1942. "In accordance with the provisions of section 510 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, there is hereby established within and for the Town of Newtown, a Fire Department to be known and designated as the *Newtown Fire Department* for the purpose of protecting life and property within the Town of Newtown from fire and other emergencies."

The operation, supervision and management of the Department is vested in a Board of Fire Commissioners, consisting of 7 members. Each Company is represented on the Board by one member and these five men choose two other members who are not associated officially with any Fire Company. These seven men choose a Fire Marshall and a Deputy Fire Marshall with executive power to carry out the policies of the Board.

The Board meets monthly, examines the operations of the previous month, including expenditures, and authorizes the payment by the Town of the Fire Department obligations that have been properly incurred. The Board handles no money, but does operate within the budget figure approved at Town Meetings.

The Town-owned switchboard has been most efficient in handling fire calls as far as its equipment permits.

Fire Department Telephone:

Emergency Only—All Districts: Garden 6-4425

Routine and Business Calls: Garden 6-2501

PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

The town Health Officer is appointed by the Board of Selectmen for a term of three years. He is compensated on a fee basis for services rendered. His primary responsibility relates to the control of communicable diseases and public sanitation. In carrying out these duties he works in co-operation with the State Department of Health under whose authority health regulations are established. He also works in association with the local physicians, the School Nurse and the Public Health Nurse, the Sanitary Inspector and other public officials.

Preventive programs include periodic examinations of school children, immunization, and quarantine when necessary. All cases of communicable disease must be reported to the Health Officer; it is his responsibility to see that adequate safeguards are taken for the protection of public health.

The Health Officer is also responsible for routine inspection of restaurants and other food dispensing establishments, as well as periodic checks on milk and water supplies and on trailer camps. Sanitary inspections of sewage disposal systems are made by a Sanitary Inspector when ordered by the Health Officer.

General responsibility for the care of the poor is vested in the Board of Selectmen. All inquiries as to available facilities or services should be directed to them. In actual practice, the greater portion of available aid is administered by various state agencies, from state and federal funds. If the applicant is adjudged eligible for state aid the function of the Selectmen's office is largely that of receiving the applications and referring them to the appropriate department for attention. If no state aid is possible the responsibility rests with the town.

The Connecticut State Welfare Department, through its public assistance program, grants basic maintenance costs for needy persons who meet legal requirements such as age, residence, lack of a legally-liable relative who could support, etc. for the following four types of aid:

Old Age Assistance for persons 65 years of age or older.

Aid to Dependent Children for children "deprived of parental support or care by reason of death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity of a parent."

Aid to the Blind.

Aid to the Disabled—for persons who are permanently and totally incapacitated.

Financial need is the eligibility requirement common to all these programs. Monthly cash payments cover such basic items as food, shelter, household operation (fuel, etc.), personal expenses (clothing, etc.) and also, when

appropriate, certain special needs such as housekeeper or homemaker service, telephone, etc. The need for medical care is met outside the monthly grant and covers a wide variety of medical expenses. The state-wide average monthly individual grants, excluding the cost of medical care, for March 1955, were \$69.49 for Old Age Assistance, \$109.40 (per family) for Aid to Dependent Children, \$80.85 for Aid to Blind and \$85.52 for Aid to the Disabled.

The case load for Newtown for the same month was:

Old Age: 53

Aid to Dependent Children: 5 (families)

Aid to the Disabled: 0

Town expenditures for care of dependent persons during the fiscal year ending September 30, 1954 was \$12,458.06.

Chapter IV

NEWTOWN SCHOOLS

General Organization

The Newtown school system operates under the control of the Board of Education composed of six members. This is a bi-partisan board representing the two major parties and its candidates are nominated at the respective caucuses. They are elected for a term of six years with two members elected every two years at the biennial town election. Board of Education members serve without pay, except the secretary, who receives a small salary for clerical work and disbursing and accounting for budget funds.

The Board of Education formulates the educational policies for the operation of the school system.

Since education is a state function there are many state laws governing educational policy. These laws control such matters as certification of teachers, compulsory attendance, length of school year, certain required subjects, etc. Where no state law governs, the local board decides its own policy.

The superintendent of schools, as executive officer of the Board, is responsible for administering the board policies. Responsible to the superintendent for operating their respective schools are a high school supervising principal and elementary school supervising principals, to whom the teachers in their buildings are directly responsible for the performance of their duties. The school system also employs 2 clerks and 6 janitors.

School Plants and Facilities

School plants and facilities consist at present of the Hawley Elementary School of 19 rooms with a small auditorium and a small gymnasium. There is a separate kindergarten building of 2 rooms, which was originally built as a temporary annex to house the home economics classes which are now in the high school. The older part of the Hawley School, consisting of 9 classrooms, the auditorium and the gymnasium was built in 1921 as a gift to the town by Miss Mary E. Hawley. She at the same time set up for the maintenance of the building a small fund which is administered by the town treasurer. This partially maintains the building. An addition of 10 classrooms with teachers' room and health and music rooms was completed in 1948.

The Hawley School is on the site of approximately 6 acres, including Taylor Field which is the playground for this school, and which was a gift to the town by Cornelius B. Taylor.

In addition to the Hawley School there is a four-room elementary school in Sandy Hook housing grade 3 which is being replaced within the coming year by a modern 16-room building with 14 primary and intermediate classrooms for grades 1 through 6, and 2 kindergarten rooms. This building will also have a cafeteria-assembly room, a playroom, health unit, music room and administrative offices. This new school is being built on a site of 12 acres and is located near the center of Sandy Hook.

Newtown has a new high school completed in 1953 which has 18 classrooms, including a home economics suite, art room, a commercial section of three rooms, two laboratories and music facilities. It has a gymnasium which may be divided for instruction into two sections by an electrically operated collapsible partition. There is a cafeteria-assembly room with a cafeteria kitchen adjoining. It has also a general shop, an agricultural shop, a library, a health unit, and an administrative section composed of a general office and adjoining offices for the guidance director, principal, and superintendent of schools.

Transportation

In a large rural town such as Newtown where schools are largely centralized, approximately 80% of the children are transported to school. At present a fleet of nine school buses, most of which have a capacity of fifty-four children, is required to transport our pupils to and from school. Each bus makes at least two round trips with children both morning and afternoon. In addition to the large buses there are also two station wagons and two sedans engaged in transporting school children, making a total of 13 drivers.

In 1956 an additional bus will be required to carry our growing school population.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

The program of the elementary schools of Newtown is more or less standard for all schools in the State of Connecticut.

General supervision of the over-all program is made by a supervising principal under the superintendent of schools.

The elementary program is carried out by a staff of twenty-three classroom teachers aided in art, music and physical education by supervisors in their respective fields. In 1954-55 the number of pupils is 718 which includes the 100 kindergarten children.

The three R's, social studies, language, science and health make up the academic subjects studied by all children from first through sixth grades.

Art, music and physical education are also taught, but these classes do not meet every day.

Extra curricular activities as such are not feasible in our present organization due to the transportation problem. However we do have 2 fine musical organizations for the members of grades 4, 5 and 6, namely the Junior Band and the Junior Orchestra. These two groups now number approximately 78 children.

A kindergarten program for all children who are at least four and a half years of age is also offered in our elementary program. It offers the boys and girls of pre-school age the opportunity of learning to work and play with others as well as developing habits of group behavior which will enable them to enter into the more formal school program at the age of six years.

A health program is carried on by a full time registered nurse and a part-time dental hygienist.

Accidents and illnesses are promptly cared for by the school nurse. Yearly physical health examinations are given by one of the local doctors and records of those examinations are kept by the school nurse, who administers sight and hearing tests.

The work of the dental hygienist is assisted by the local Visiting Nurse Association through the payment of half of her salary and the aid of volunteer workers. This hygienist works half time in the school system dividing her days between the elementary and the high schools. Her work is examining all childrens' teeth, recommending remedial work when necessary and administering the fluoride treatment for prevention of tooth decay.

Both the nurse and dental hygienist also meet with the various classes to instruct them in the proper preventive measures in problems of physical and dental health.

NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

Newtown High School (grades 7 through 12) offers a comprehensive educational program to the secondary school age youth of the community. The 7th and 8th grade classes in this school are non-departmentalized. That is, the pupils stay in one room with one teacher, except for courses in the industrial arts, home economics, art, music and physical education.

There are 20 teachers in the high school not including the music supervisor, who divides his time among all the schools, and 410 pupils in the six grades during the school year 1954-1955.

The curriculum of the high school is such that a student may prepare for college entrance or receive a general education that will equip him with a background of knowledge and skills necessary for living in our present-day society.

Subjects which prepare our young people for admission to colleges and universities include English, mathematics, 2 years of Latin and French, history, physics, chemistry, biology, general science, and electives in art, music and other fields. The high school is fully accredited by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary schools.

Other subjects are offered to prepare students for commercial and business careers.

It is also possible to major in Industrial Arts or Home Economics. These subjects are exploratory in nature and are required at junior high school level, while elective for upper high school students.

Of long-standing importance to the community in past years as well as now is the Vocational-Agricultural course which trains young people in all of the practical aspects of farming and agriculture. This is the only course of its kind given in Fairfield county. Many of the students in Vocational Agriculture are tuition pupils from surrounding towns and much time is spent

in field trips and actual working experience on farms, carrying out special projects of a practical nature. The salary of the Vocational-Agriculture teacher is paid directly by the state.

The curriculum of the Newtown High School is administered in a flexible manner. That is, the courses required by state statute, or those which are definitely basic to college entrance or any other specialized course of study are mandatory. Other students, through guidance, are allowed to elect those courses or subjects which will either better fit them for entrance to a college or university of their choice or fit their needs in terms of a general educational program.

Newtown High School operates one of the most extensive physical education programs in the state. Each pupil from grade 7 through grade 12, participates daily in organized physical education classes.

The addition of art to the high school curriculum has provided an opportunity for students to develop their creative abilities. Exploratory but required at the junior high school level, art courses are elective at the upper high school grades.

Newtown High School offers a wide program in the field of music. The school is fortunate in being able to support four distinct organizations: A Senior Band, Senior Orchestra, Senior Chorus, and Junior Chorus. These provide practical opportunity for the development of musical talent.

SPECIAL SERVICES

GUIDANCE: Guidance service is provided for every student in Newtown High School. Individual conferences with every pupil, a full testing program and well organized cumulative records, covering all of the years spent by the pupil in school, are some of the means used to provide help to the individual.

HEALTH: A registered nurse is employed whose time devoted to the high school is at present adequate for the number of pupils.

Health services include physical examinations of all pupils every three years. This includes a hearing examination. Vision of all pupils is checked every year. A part time dental hygienist is carrying on an educational program examining children's teeth and making referrals for dental care.

ACTIVITIES: Newtown High School has a well rounded program of pupil activities. In addition to varsity and intra-mural sports, opportunities for participation are provided in dramatics, a school newspaper, class organizations, student council and Future Farmers of America, as well as many others. Social affairs in the form of class and school dances and picnics are an integral part of the activity program operated by the high school.

RECREATION

In April, 1922, the playground at Hawley School "a tract of land 8 acres more or less" was deeded by Cornelius B. Taylor on the following terms "to be used as a playground for the children of Newtown, especially and primarily

those of the Hawley School, and shall not be diverted to uses inconsistent therewith during my lifetime, nor thereafter except with the unanimous consent of all my heirs and lineal descendants. Its use for a few hours for athletic contests in which school children do not actually participate may be permitted, or it may be used for public educational or community purposes such as Chatauquas are. Persons desiring to make any such outside use shall first make application and obtain a written permit therefor. Permits may be issued or refused by the School Board of Newtown.” “This deed conditional as follows: No ball game or other game in the nature of a contest which attracts spectators shall be played upon said Taylor Field or any part thereof upon Sunday. If this condition shall be broken with the consent of or by the indifference or negligence either of the Town authorities or of the School authorities of said Town, then this deed shall become wholly void, and one of my heirs or descendants may enter at will, and retake possession in fee simple free of all incumbrances.”

In 1939, the heirs consented to the field’s use for public school purposes other than those named in the deed as the School Board shall determine (for more school buildings or extensions) provided that there shall still be a playground or playgrounds suitable in size, condition and equipment for the School pupils (or others for lawful athletic sports as designated and permitted by the School Board).

The heirs also consented to its use on Sunday.

NEWTOWN PARK COMMISSION

The Newtown Park Commission was formed, following a resolution adopted at a special town meeting held on December 17, 1954, to accept a gift of \$50,000 from Bertram A. Stroock toward the establishment of a town recreational park.

In accordance with the resolution, the Commission is a six member board comprised of the Town Health Officer and five appointees from the following organizations: Board of Selectmen, Board of Managers of the Edmond Town Hall, Rotary Club, Lions Club and the Visiting Nurse Association. The Town Health Officer is the only permanent member of the Board. The other members serve for a term of two years. Appointees are subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

On January 15, 1955, the Newtown Park Commission held its organizational meeting. The late Mr. Dickinson was elected chairman.

Since that time, the Commission investigated many properties throughout the town and had numerous consultations with professional landscape archi-

tects, site and town planners to determine the recreational needs of the town. After making a careful study, the commissioners selected a site near the center of town which is suitable in every respect for a town park. The tract is located a little more than a mile from the flagpole, fronting on Elm Drive, Brushy Hill Road and Deep Brook Road. Deep Brook runs through the property. The land is largely level and wooded with maples, elms and oaks. A border contains valuable plantings of pines, hemlocks and spruces with rhododendron, laurel and azalea among them.

At a special town meeting on May 6, 1955, the voters gave their approval for the purchase of this site as recommended by the Commission. The Board of Selectmen was authorized to purchase the land with money from the fund given by Mr. Stroock.

The Commission has engaged the services of the National Recreation Association to make a master plan for the entire park. The association is a non-profit organization which gives professional counsel in the entire field of recreation, including facility and area planning. It has offices throughout the United States with headquarters in New York City.

The plan calls for swimming pool, bath houses, wading pool, parking space, play areas for children, junior baseball diamond, two tennis courts, skating rink, picnic areas, walks and a monumental flag pole. In order to implement this plan, it was necessary to have boundary and topographical surveys made.

Fully aware of how important the formation of the park was to the late A. Fenn Dickinson, and in recognition of the invaluable assistance he gave as chairman, the Commission unanimously agreed that the park should be dedicated as a memorial to him.

At present, Mr. Stroock is temporary chairman of the Commission.

The Commission intends to provide the swimming pool first. The other facilities will be added when the Park Commission has the funds to assume the expense of their construction.

Chapter V

RELIGIOUS LIFE

There are four Protestant Churches, one Catholic Church and one Synagogue in Newtown.

Congregational

Services—Beginning in September there will be two Sunday Services at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. Two sessions of Church School at the same hours with classes from nursery through High School.

Organizations—Young People's Club, Women's Federation divided into Eight Circles, Couple's Club, Adult Bible Study Class, Weekday Nursery School, Layman's Fellowship, Senior, High School and Junior Choirs.

Trinity (Episcopal)

Services—Holy Communion every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. and at 11:00 a.m. the first Sunday of each month. Morning Prayer at 11:00 a.m. the other Sundays. Church School for all ages at 9:45 a.m.

Organizations—Woman's Auxiliary, Rector's Chapter, Altar Guild, Acolytes' Guild, Vestry, Senior and Junior Choirs.

Methodist

Service of worship at 9:15 a.m. Nursery Class at same time. Church School for all ages at 10:00 a.m.

Organization—Dorcas Society.

St. John's (Episcopal)

Service each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Communion first and third Sundays. Sunday School at 10:30 a.m.

Organizations—St. John's Guild, Ladies' Guild.

St. Rose (Catholic)

Masses—Sundays at 7:30, 9:00, and 11:00 a.m. with one more at 6:15 a.m. in the summer. Weekdays at 7:10 and 7:40 a.m. the first Friday of each month at 6:45 and 7:30 a.m.

Confessions—Saturdays 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Eves of Holy Days and Thursdays preceding first Fridays.

Organizations—Council of Catholic Women, Rosary and Altar Societies, Holy Name Society, Catholic Youth Organization.

Jewish Synagogue

No resident Rabbi. The President of the congregation conducts services on Saturdays. A Rabbi from Danbury teaches a Hebrew School three times a week.



LIBRARIES

The handsome brick library building on the Main Street—more like a spacious private house in appearance than a public institution—came into existence, like so many other things in Newtown, through the generosity of the late Mary Elizabeth Hawley. In her will Miss Hawley bequeathed to the town of Newtown the sum of \$200,000 for “the purpose of erecting and equipping a building to be used as a free public library . . . to be known as The Cyrenius H. Booth Library,” and also left the sum of \$250,000, the income of which was to be used for the maintenance of the library. Cyrenius H. Booth was Miss Hawley’s grandfather and one of Newtown’s well-known doctors during the middle nineteenth century.

At a special meeting on October 24, 1930 the town voted to accept the bequest and at a later meeting on December 5th a building committee was elected. The building was first opened to the public December 17, 1932.

While the library is maintained for the benefit of the town and is free to all residents, it is a private institution in the sense that its Board of Trustees is self-perpetuating, not elected or appointed, and none of its income is derived from the tax funds of the town. The principal fund is held by a Hartford bank as trustee under Miss Hawley’s will and the annual income is paid to the treasurer of Newtown to be used only by order of the trustees. For a number of years, especially during the 1930’s, the income was more than sufficient for maintenance but with rising costs after the war and increased demands for

library service it became necessary to appeal to friends and users of the library for annual contributions.

During the year 1954 there were 2437 active subscribers and a total of 33,769 books were circulated. The total number of volumes in the library was 21,842. The library aims to maintain a well balanced collection of fiction and non-fiction and to build a backlog of books of permanent value. In addition to its principal function of providing reading matter, the library maintains historical rooms, presents many exhibits during the year, and provides a meeting place for various associations and groups. One special group of books, somewhat unusual in a small library, is the Julia E. C. Brush Genealogical Collection on the second floor, consisting of about 1500 volumes of genealogy, family histories, and town histories.

For many years the library has shown the work of local artists both amateur and professional during National Art Week. At present a committee of local artists is in charge of all exhibits displayed in the library.

The head librarian gives instruction in the use of the library and talks on books twice a year to the children of 4th through 7th grades. The High School Seniors in cooperation with their school receive instruction in the use of adult reference books. Senior Girl Scouts working for their Library Aide Bars spend six hours receiving instruction and thirty hours in practical service.

In The Newtown Bee the head librarian writes a weekly column of "Notes" about books old and new.

Among organizations meeting regularly in the library are: The League of Women Voters, United World Federalists, The Great Books Group, American Heritage Project, Town Players, Citizens Committee on Education.

The Booth Library is not the first library in Newtown's history nor its only one at the present time. A Newtown Library Association was organized in 1875 with headquarters in the old post office building on the Main Street, later transferred to the brick building which now houses the Stuart insurance office. In 1900 this association was presented with the gift of a new building by Rebecca D. Beach, descendant of Newtown's eighteenth century minister, the Rev. John Beach, and as the Beach Memorial Library continued to operate until the opening of the Booth Library. The legal assets of the old library, consisting principally of books, some furniture, and small trust funds, were transferred to the new.

The Sandy Hook Free Public Library Association, Inc., organized in 1906, still functions and is currently housed in the old grist mill opposite the fire house in Sandy Hook. This small library is usually open on Saturday afternoons and evenings.

LITERARY GROUPS

The Great Books Reading Group. Our Great Books Reading Group was started in 1950 and has now completed the reading and discussion of the books in the Five Years Courses prescribed by The Great Books Foundation of Chicago.

The Group meets bi-weekly on Monday evenings in the Cyrenius H. Booth Library during the fall, winter and spring. The average attendance is about 20. Visitors are always welcome. During the first year there were two regular leaders; since then the leadership has rotated among the members.

American Heritage Project. The American Heritage Project of the American Library Association was inaugurated at the Cyrenius H. Booth Library in Newtown in 1954. This group, meeting twice a month, discusses current problems of American life against the backdrop of American history and the Constitution. It is a discussion rather than a reading group, although suitable textbooks are used. About 30 were enrolled in 1954, and the project is planned as a continuing one.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

FRATERNAL AND PATRIOTIC

Free Masonry was instituted in Newtown in 1791. Its charter was revoked in 1851 and, restored in 1866, has been in active existence ever since. The Masonic Order is an international, benevolent, educational and religious organization whose special aims are to build up the character of the individual and to promote fellowship.

The Newtown Masons include Hiram Lodge No. 18 A. F. and A. M. and Hiram Chapter No. 1. Each group meets twice monthly. All subscribe to their principle of "Brotherly love, relief and truth".

Order of Eastern Star. Mirah chapter No. 113. The present chapter was instituted in 1947 and constituted in 1948. It is an international organization and the auxiliary of the Masonic fraternity. Without publicity they do many acts of charity locally, nationally and internationally. At their semi-monthly meetings a social hour usually follows the ritualistic meeting.

Knights of Columbus is a Catholic Order whose Newtown branch was established in 1896. It is a fraternal society offering life insurance to its members and is open to men over 18 years of age. The local group of 69 members meets once a month. The ideals of the society are: "Charity, Unity, Fraternity, Patriotism".

Men's Literary and Social Club. Organized in 1894 it is usually referred to as The Men's Club. Its purpose is to broaden the interests of its members and to work for town improvements. Membership is limited to 20. They meet

once a month for dinner at which time an essayist presents a speaker for the evening. Subjects may deal with local problems or world affairs.

Pohtatuck Grange, No. 129 P. of H. Organized in 1892 it now has a membership of 155. Basically it is a farm organization but open to anybody whose interests do not conflict with farming. The programs, both educational and social, are planned to appeal to the whole family. It is a fraternal group meeting twice a month with a social hour following each meeting.

Rotary Club received its charter in 1939 and now has a membership of 50, one man from each business and profession. Their Motto is "He profits most who serves best". At the weekly dinner meetings there are discussions of problems of service to the community. The club maintains four standing committees:

1. Service committee in charge of programs.
2. Community Service initiates town welfare projects which later become separate organizations, such as cub scouts, ambulance, co-sponsoring Little League Baseball.
3. International Service concerned with such activities as furthering popular interest in the U. N.; entertaining foreign students.
4. Vocational Service aims to raise ethical standards of practice in business and the professions.

In memory of Dr. Earl P. Lasher an annual award is given to the boy scout who has the highest rating on a points basis.

Once a year the club entertains at dinner an adult leader and two members of every youth organization in town at which time the boys tell about their club activities.

Lions Club organized locally in 1949 now has 37 members. It meets twice a month and its special interest is the youth of the town. In memory of its first local president, George W. Trull, they established an annual award, given to some student for outstanding citizenship. The club gave the bleachers at Taylor Field, sponsored student driver training in the High School, for three years furnished heavy craft covers for all school books, aided eye research, co-sponsored Little League Baseball and similar projects. They raise their funds by an annual carnival and by a house to house sale of electric bulbs.

Veterans of Foreign Wars. Charles Howard Peck, Sr. & Jr. Post 308.

Established here in 1939 it now numbers 69 members, and meets twice a month in the Veterans' Memorial Building. The post is open to all veterans with overseas service. In keeping with its motto "Honor the dead by helping the living" the organization is primarily dedicated to helping disabled and needy veterans and their families. It is also a fraternal, patriotic and educational group whose ideals are to foster allegiance to the government, to preserve American freedom and to defend the United States from all enemies.

The Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars was organized in 1939 and has a membership of 35. Their services consist altogether of hospital work for disabled veterans and their families. They raise funds by various projects, such as food sales, rummage sales, and roller skating parties for young people.

Eligible for membership are women whose husband, father, son or brother served on foreign soil; also nurses with overseas service.

American Legion, Raymond L. Pease Post, No. 163. Established in 1946 the Post has a membership of 30. Their chief activities are rehabilitation of veterans, community service, and "Boys' State", which is educational work in Americanism. The Legion gives annually a \$25 award to the High School senior who has shown outstanding scholarship and qualities of leadership throughout the 4 years.

American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 163. This unit was organized in 1947. Its activities are similar to those of the Legion Post: rehabilitation of veterans, child welfare work, community service, and "Girls' State", educational work in Americanism. Membership is open to wives, mothers, daughters and sisters of legionnaires.

Red Cross. A branch of the Danbury chapter, the local group maintains a skeleton crew of workers at all times ready to assist in time of disaster. Among regular Red Cross activities are: the blood bank twice a year and the canteen workers who serve refreshments for the blood bank; the children's swimming project in the summer; the motor corps which furnishes transportation to hospital, the blood bank and in emergencies. Home service, another important part of the work, makes contacts between service men and women and their families and also handles veterans' problems of various kinds. Funds are obtained from the annual contributions by townspeople. A group of over 100 volunteers make these house-to-house solicitations.

Visiting Nurse Association. Established in 1918, the funds for the work are raised by annual contributions from townspeople. Through the services of a health nurse and a board of directors the association furnishes health advice, education and home care. The Thrift Shop sponsored by the V.N.A. raises money through the sale of used clothing and housefurnishings. These funds provide dental care for school children.

Alcoholics Anonymous. The present group began meeting in 1954 and is increasing. It is composed of 20 members, men and women whose sole aim is to combat the disease of alcoholism. They meet weekly.

The League of Women Voters. The purpose of the League is “to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government”. In other words, the League aims to help citizens to take an active part in working for better government locally, in the state, and in the nation.

How is the League’s purpose carried out by its members?

by providing information, building public opinion, and supporting
legislation through
study and discussion groups
meetings open to the public
distribution of League publications
articles in newspapers and magazines
radio, TV programs, films
testimony at hearings
communicating with public officials

How is the League program formulated?

In a truly democratic process: Each League adopts a program of work on local government at its annual meeting from suggestions by the membership and the local board of directors. The state program, decided on at the state convention, is based on recommendations by local League members sent either directly or through the local board of directors or through the delegates to the state convention. The items for national government are selected from suggestions by local and state Leagues at the biennial national convention.

Who may belong to the League?

The League is open to every woman citizen! Being non-partisan the League neither supports political parties nor candidates, but studies issues and urges political action in the public interest. It encourages members to take an active part in the party of their own choice.

How does the League serve Newtown voters?

Regular activities include:
voters handbooks
instruction in the use of voting machines
general election information
candidates’ meetings
stimulating citizen interest in voting

Other League activities in Newtown include studies and reports made on:

- property valuation
- our schools
- one-man assessor
- planning and zoning
- welfare
- mental institutions
- town ordinances
- high school essay contest resulting in trips to the United Nations
- entertaining members of the United Nations Secretariat
- conducted trips to the United Nations for townspeople
- publication of the Newtown map

Finances and miscellaneous facts

The League is supported by:

- dues from members
- contributions from members
- contributions from interested citizens
- special projects

The League of Women Voters was organized in 1920 and now has a local League in every state as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington, D.C. Our Newtown League founded in 1948, now has 136 members and would gladly welcome many more Newtown women interested in good government.

United World Federalists. The Newtown Chapter affiliated with the State and National organizations, was established in 1947. Its objective is to strengthen and help the development of the United Nations into a limited World Federal Government with powers adequate to insure peace. There are 36 members in the group who meet once a month.

Newtown Scholarship Association was formed in 1936 for the purpose of establishing scholarships for qualified High School graduating students who need financial assistance to continue their education. The number of scholarships depends on the amount of money raised annually through subscriptions and life memberships. To quote from the president's letter of May, 1955:

“Forty such awards, given annually since 1937, have been based on financial need combined with promise of achievement, and the excellent scholarship records made by recipients in such colleges and universities as Barnard, Brown, Columbia, Connecticut, Iowa, Middlebury, Springfield and Wellesley have more than justified our confidence in their worthiness. (A 1951 winner has recently received a Fulbright Scholarship.)”

Citizen's Committee on Education was organized in 1953 by an independent group of residents. It is open to all townspeople whether parents of school children or not. Present membership about 100. The chief purposes of the group are: to become better informed about education and Newtown's school system; to make studies of certain school problems and occasionally to hold public forums; to cooperate with all school officials and the Parent-Teachers' Association. A recently completed project was the study of "The Reading Program of Newtown Elementary Schools".

Parent-Teachers' Association. With a membership of about 600, its aims are to interest parents, teachers and other individuals in the improvement of school conditions. This group sponsors the Used Clothing Exchange, the proceeds from which are used for scholarships for higher education. In addition it maintains throughout the year a Career Conference committee for student guidance; a committee for Teachers' Lodgings; a committee for After School Activities. Each September it sponsors a Children's Fair. Monthly meetings are devoted to problems concerned with schools and a better community.

Mothers' Club. The local club with a membership of about 65 was organized in 1945. Its principal aim is to help mothers improve their understanding of children and the home. They meet once a month and usually have a speaker. Also, they sponsor 3 scout troops, contribute to local health needs and to the Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund.

Homemakers' Club. Founded in 1922 and affiliated with the Extension Service of the University of Connecticut it now has 27 members. Monthly meetings are led by 2 members who have been to a training class in Danbury and who in turn teach the other members what they have learned. All the projects are concerned with homemaking and crafts such as hooked rug-making, foreign cooking, stenciling fabrics, information on detergents, the complete use of sewing machines, etc.

Horticulture Club. Organized in 1953 its membership is limited to 45 men and women of Newtown.

Its objectives are to:

1. promote interest in horticulture
2. encourage and assist civic projects involving horticulture
3. further the conservation of natural resources especially soil and water
4. increase knowledge of the artistic use of plant material both outdoors and in

Berkshire Garden Club. Organized in 1954, the purposes of the club are to promote an interest in good gardening and to participate in civic and community improvements. The number is limited to 30 residents of the town and

10 associate out-of-town members. It sponsors an annual plant sale and flower show.

The 4H Club is one of the oldest clubs in town, and is connected with the Extension Service of the University of Connecticut. Its aim is to help the youth of America to become better citizens by doing 4H projects. The club is open to all girls and boys of ages 9 to 21 and is divided into groups. The girls have two homemaking clubs where they are taught homemaking, cooking, sewing, child care, etc. The boys' groups are instructed in agriculture, chicken raising, dairy, sheep raising, etc. For outstanding accomplishments prizes are awarded by the county agent.

Boy Scouts. Formally organized in Newtown in 1928 with two patrols, there are now 200 scouts. The number includes the Cubs, from 8 to 11 years of age; Boy Scouts 11 to 14; Explorers over 14. In 1945 land was purchased on Church Street on which were built two cabins, one for boys, the other for girls, where the regular weekly meetings are held. The Explorers go on many trips including skiing and canoeing under the leadership of their scout master. He formed the original group, and has been honored with the Silver Beaver, one of Scouts' highest national awards.

The principal aim of Boy Scouting, an International Organization, is "to teach citizenship through love of outdoors, nature and fun". Their familiar motto is "Be prepared", their slogan "Do a good deed daily".

Girl Scouts. Organized in 1928 the Girl Scouts now include the Brownies of 2nd, 3rd, 4th grades in school; the Intermediates 5th-8th grades; and the seniors 9th-12th grades. The total enrollment is about 190. They meet once a week in their own cabin on Church Street unless they go on out-of-town trips.

The seniors must complete a 5 point program before they are eligible to work for their "aide bars". These points are: camping, service, emergency preparation, council and expanding interests along chosen lines. The 2 kinds of "aide bars" for which seniors have worked are hospital and library. About 50 adults are connected with the work of the Girl Scouts.

The organization is international whose chief purpose is "training in citizenship, in service, and in consideration for one's fellow man".

Boys' Social & Athletic Club. Popularly called SAC. It originated in 1946 and was incorporated in 1948, as an independent, self-governing, non-sectarian, non-political, self-sustaining organization to promote "health, social, athletic and character development of the boys in this vicinity". Boys 10 to 20 years of age are elected to membership on the basis of character qualifications. They must work to be "active members". Otherwise, if away at school or in the service they become "inactive members".

In addition, for legal purposes there is a group of 40 to 45 adults called "Sustaining Members". The newest group of 25 is of "Participating Alumni".

Annual dues for boys 10-16 is \$1.00; 16 years and over \$2.00; Sustaining Members \$10.00. Local activities take place in their own SAC Park. Some of their major projects are made possible by contributions from interested townspeople and their one benefit a year.

Town Players. Organized in 1936 this group has the unusual distinction of having sustained itself continuously for almost twenty years including the war period. It has put on all types of plays, usually four a year. The group now numbers 70 and membership is open to all who enjoy amateur theatricals in all its various aspects: writing, directing, producing, acting, lighting, make-up, costuming, scenery, public relations.

At present Town Players own a tiny playshop but they hope some day to build some sort of little theater which would be available for continuous use both for rehearsals and productions.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

Newtown Fish and Game Club. Organized about 30 years ago the club now numbers about 200 members and they welcome additional members. Their special interests are the preservation of fish and game in the community, and affording special opportunities for fishing and hunting for the members.

Little League Baseball. A branch of the National Organization, the local Little League was formed in 1955 sponsored by some local service clubs, business firms and individuals. In accordance with national regulations there are 4 teams of 15 boys in each. Their ages are 8-12 years and they play at Taylor Field.

Other Clubs: Newtown Country Club, Rock Ridge Country Club, Badminton Club, Bowling Club, Kennel Club.

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